The BOYS
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2012
FIN.
DIGITAL OMNIBUS VOLUME 3

THE BOYS™

PROPER PREPERATION AND PLANNING PART ONE

BY
GARTH ENNIS

WITH
RUSS BRAUN

AND
TONY AVIÑA

ISSUE #48 • $3.99
MATURE READERS

Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

FORTY-EIGHT

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

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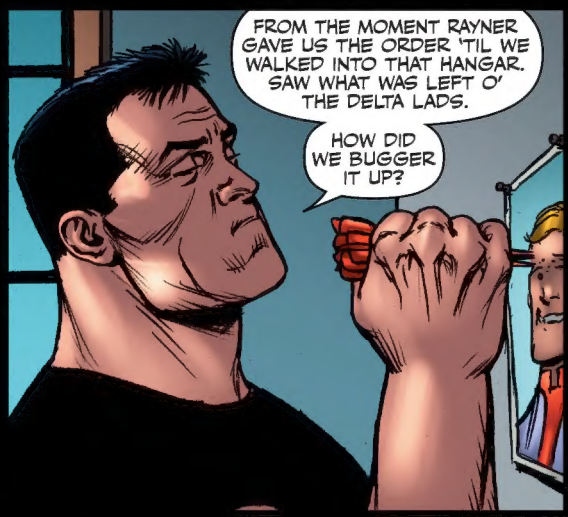
PROPER PREPARATION AND PLANNING

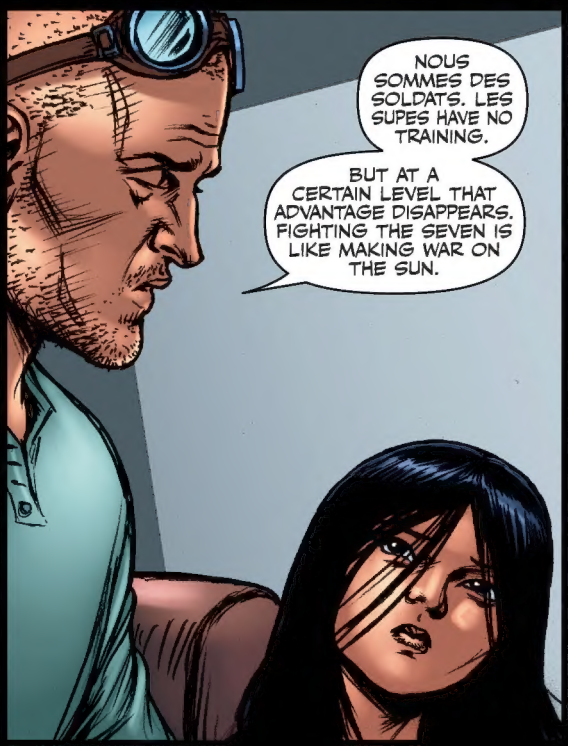
part one

AVEC THE LAMPLIGHTER? ET COLONEL MALLORY'S GRANDAUGHTERS?
NO, THAT WAS THE END RESULT. I'M TALKIN' ABOUT THE WHOLE THING, WHY WHAT HAPPENED HAPPENED.


FROM THE MOMENT RAYNER GAVE US THE ORDER 'TIL WE WALKED INTO THAT HANGAR. SAW WHAT WAS LEFT O' THE DELTA LADS.
HOW DID WE BUGGER IT UP?

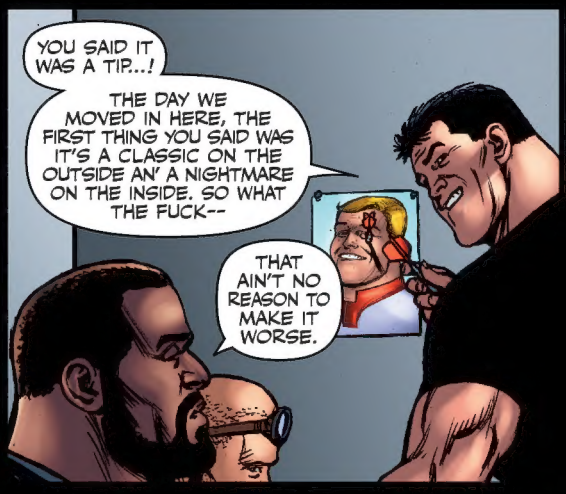
WE GOT...LAZY.
YEAH?
SUPES WE HIT UP 'TIL THEN WEREN'T SHIT.

I MEAN THEY GOT THE POWER, BUT IT'S KINDA LIKE FIGHTIN' A JUNKIE WIT' A SHOTGUN. TIME HE FIGURES OUT THE SAFETY, YOU TAKEN IT OFF HIM AN' BUST IT OVER HIS HEAD.
BUT THE SEVEN...
C'EST VRAI.


NOUS SOMMES DES SOLDATS. LES SUPES HAVE NO TRAINING.
BUT AT A CERTAIN LEVEL THAT ADVANTAGE DISAPPEARS. FIGHTING THE SEVEN IS LIKE MAKING WAR ON THE SUN.

I GUESS WE OUGHTA BE EXACT 'BOUT THIS: IT AIN'T SO MUCH THE SEVEN. IT'S THE HOMELANDER, MAEVE AN' BLACK NOIR, THE OTHER FOUR WERE NEVER IN THEIR LEAGUE.
STILL AIN'T.
AH, LAIT DE LA MERE. GOOD POINT.
I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT THE HOMELANDER...
WE KNOW WHAT HE IS PLANNING, MORE OR LESS. WHAT HE HAS AGREED TO DO FOR VOUGHT. ALL OF WHICH SUGGESTS THAT HE IS...CAREFUL?
IN EXECUTION OF THESE PLANS, HE SHOWS DISCRETION. PATIENCE. SENSE. YET WE KNOW THE THINGS HE'S DONE, WE'VE SEEN THE PICTURES.
WE EACH OF US KNOW ALL TOO WELL WHAT LURKS INSIDE THAT MIND.
SO: HOW DOES SUCH A DEVIL LEARN RESTRAINT?
WE ALREADY KNOW HE'S FUCKIN' PSYCHOTIC, IT AIN'T A REAL STRETCH TO SAY HE'S GOT SOME BIPOLAR SHIT GOIN' ON TOO...
ONE DOES NOT ALWAYS FOLLOW FROM THE OTHER. BUT IF IT HAS, SHOULD WE NOT KNOW FOR SURE?
HUH.
YEAH, GOOD POINT, FRENCHIE. YOU LOOK INTO THAT ONE?
SURE.
SEVEN TAPES, WHAT WE KNOW OF THE TOSSER'S HISTORY, ALL THAT. GO BACK OVER THE LOT OF IT, SEE IF THERE'S SOMETHIN' WE MISSED.
GOT IT.
YOU WANNA DO SOMETHIN' FOR ME?

EH?
QUIT THROWIN' GODDAMN DARTS AT THE WALL. PLACE IS A HISTORIC BUILDIN', THEY DON'T COME MORE HISTORIC THAN THIS.

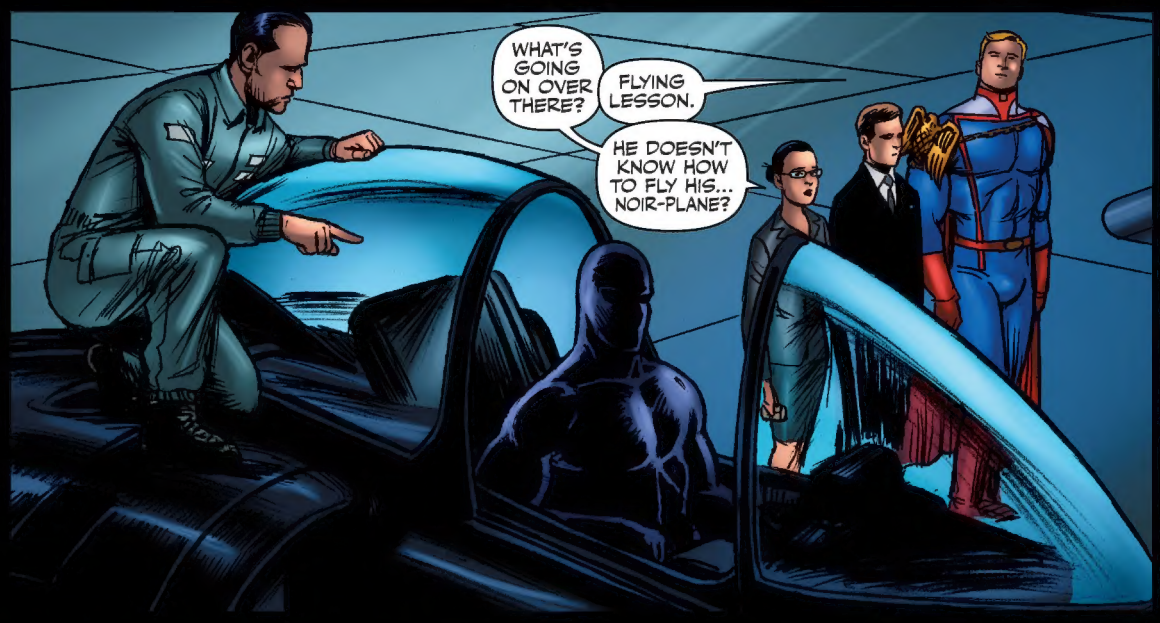

YOU SAID IT WAS A TIP...!
THE DAY WE MOVED IN HERE, THE FIRST THING YOU SAID WAS IT'S A CLASSIC ON THE OUTSIDE AN' A NIGHTMARE ON THE INSIDE. SO WHAT THE FUCK--
THAT AIN'T NO REASON TO MAKE IT WORSE.

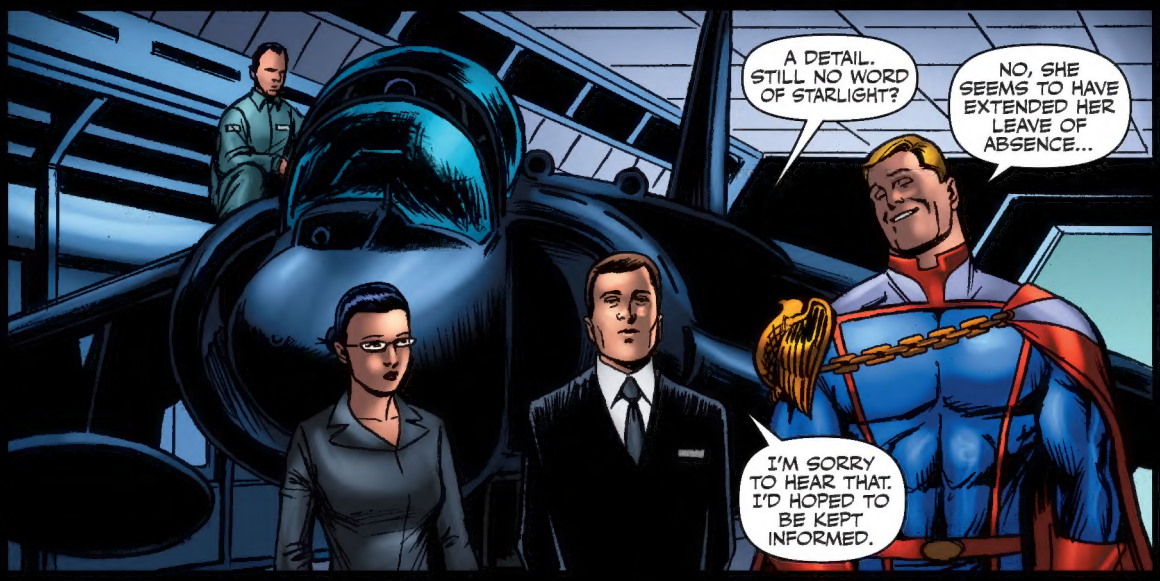
RIGHT, WELL, I'LL GO AN' BUY MESELF A DARTBOARD THEN. BLOODY HELL.
THANKS, MATE, JUST LIKE OLD TIMES...
IT IS?
HUGHIE RUNNIN' KINDA LATE, DON'T YOU THINK?

FRENCHIE...
ANOTHER MOMENT, M'SIEU CHARCUTER?
YEAH. BUY HER AN ICE CREAM OR SOMETHIN', WILL YOU?

HHHH.

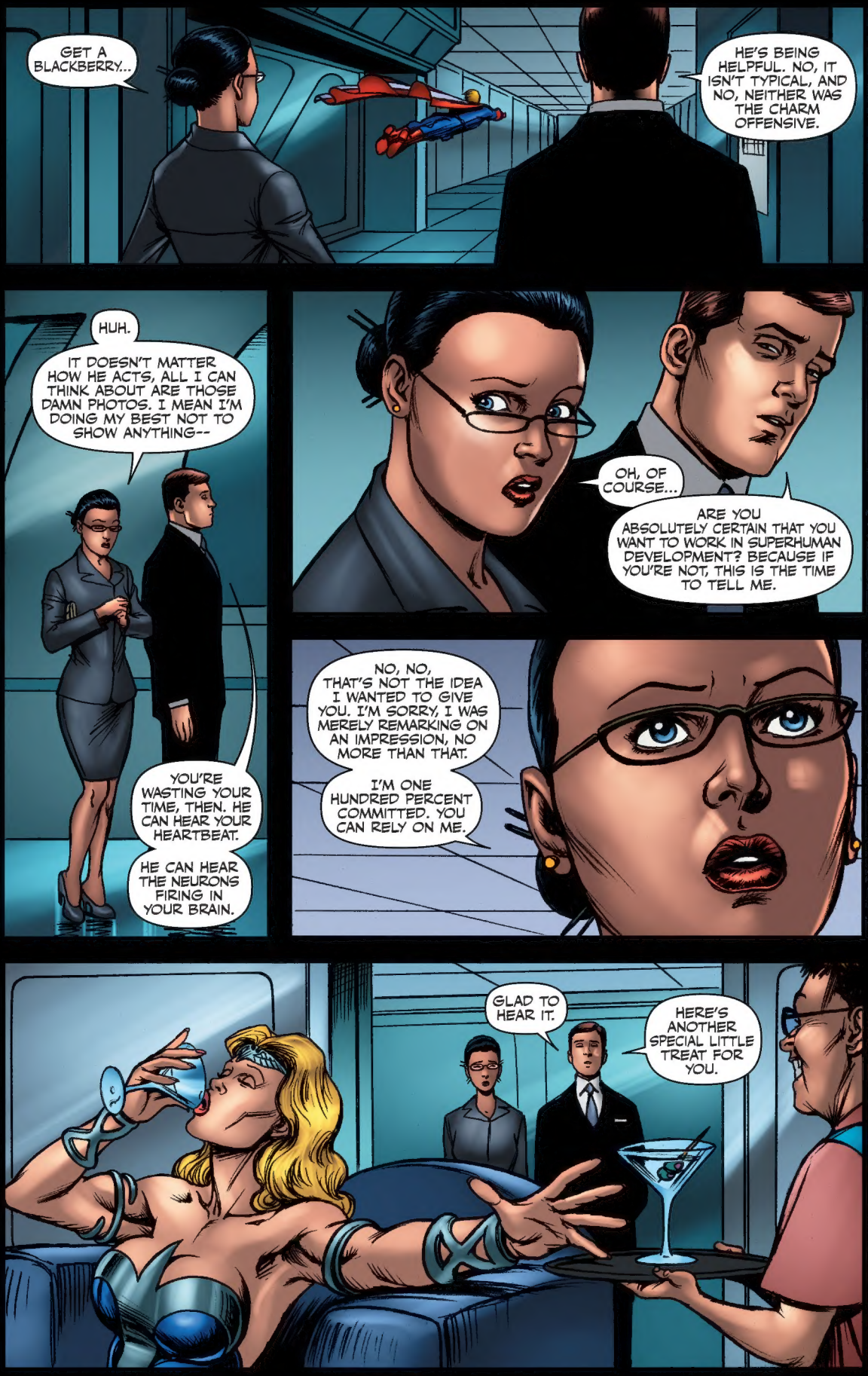
MS. BRADLEY, WE MEET AT LAST. AN ABSOLUTE PLEASURE.
THANK YOU...
PLEASANT FLIGHT, I HOPE?
AH, YES. SHORT.
OF COURSE. I UNDERSTAND WE'RE GOING TO BE WORKING QUITE CLOSELY TOGETHER; I DO HOPE I'LL HAVE A CHANCE TO GET TO KNOW YOU BETTER.
AND HOW ARE *YOU*, SIR...?
VERY WELL, THANK YOU.
WHAT ARE WE DOING DOWN HERE?
WHAT'S *HE* DOING, COME TO THAT?
NOT SURE.
KIND OF...GETTING ON THE TEAM?


WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?
FLYING LESSON.
HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO FLY HIS... NOIR-PLANE?


A DETAIL. STILL NO WORD OF STARLIGHT?
NO, SHE SEEMS TO HAVE EXTENDED HER LEAVE OF ABSENCE...
I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT. I'D HOPED TO BE KEPT INFORMED.

YOU'RE QUITE RIGHT. IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN, I ASSURE YOU.
ON A HAPPIER NOTE, I CAN TELL YOU THAT EVERYTHING WENT WELL WITH THE N.Y.P.D. VISIT.
GLAD TO HEAR IT.
YES, I TOLD THEM I LEFT THE MULLERS AT THE ENTRANCE TO I-87. I CALLED FOR AN UPDATE, BUT NO ONE'S HEARD A THING.

DO THE POLICE SUSPECT, UH...?
ALL I KNOW IS THAT THE FAMILY'S BEEN LISTED AS MISSING PERSONS. I'M STARTING TO FEAR THE WORST.
LOOK, I REALLY AM SORRY YOU'RE UPSET ABOUT STARLIGHT. LET ME CHECK TO SEE IF SHE'S EMAILED, THEN I'LL MEET YOU IN THE LOUNGE.
OKAY?


GET A BLACKBERRY...
HE'S BEING HELPFUL. NO, IT ISN'T TYPICAL, AND NO, NEITHER WAS THE CHARM OFFENSIVE.
HUH.
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW HE ACTS, ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT ARE THOSE DAMN PHOTOS. I MEAN I'M DOING MY BEST NOT TO SHOW ANYTHING--
YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME, THEN. HE CAN HEAR YOUR HEARTBEAT.
HE CAN HEAR THE NEURONS FIRING IN YOUR BRAIN.
OH, OF COURSE...
ARE YOU ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT YOU WANT TO WORK IN SUPERHUMAN DEVELOPMENT? BECAUSE IF YOU'RE NOT, THIS IS THE TIME TO TELL ME.
NO, NO, THAT'S NOT THE IDEA I WANTED TO GIVE YOU. I'M SORRY, I WAS MERELY REMARKING ON AN IMPRESSION, NO MORE THAN THAT.
I'M ONE HUNDRED PERCENT COMMITTED. YOU CAN RELY ON ME.
GLAD TO HEAR IT.
HERE'S ANOTHER SPECIAL LITTLE TREAT FOR YOU.

YOU GOT SOMETHIN' YOU WANNA--
OH, ACT YER AGE, FOR FUCK'S SAKE.

I DUNNO WHAT PISSES ME OFF THE MOST. THE FACT YOU'RE DOIN' THIS, OR THE WAY YOU'RE GOIN' ABOUT IT.
ALL THIS SARCASTIC BOLLOCKS, LIKE ONE O' THESE CUNTS ON THE FUCKIN' INTERNET: TELL ME SOMETHIN', WILL YOU?

SINCE WHEN IS *THAT* YOU?

HUGHIE'S GONNA BE BACK. MALCHEMICAL WAS A COCK-UP, IT WAS MY MISTAKE, BUT IT AIN'T THE REASON HE WENT WALKABOUT.
THAT WAS THIS SLAPPER, WHOEVER SHE WAS. I DUNNO WHAT SPLIT 'EM UP AN' I KNOW HE WASN'T SAYIN', BUT WHATEVER IT WAS HE'S GONNA GET OVER IT.
THEN HE'LL COME HOME.

AN' LISTEN, ONE LAST BLEEDIN' TIME: *I-DID-NOT-NICK-THAT-FUCKIN'-FLASK-OF-YOURS.*
SO ARE YOU GONNA BE ALL RIGHT WITH THIS, OR WHAT?

...SHIT...

WE SORTED, THEN?
MM.
MAGIC. AN' LOOK, FOR FUTURE REFERENCE, IF YOU DO HAVE SOME SORT O' PROBLEM: NOT IN FRONT O' THE NUTTERS, EH?

MM.

I GOT A PRACTICAL QUESTION.
SHOOT.
YOU SAID BEFORE WE HAVE ANOTHER GO. THAT REALLY WHAT WE DOIN'?

I DON'T SEE HOW WE CAN'T.
FRENCHIE HEARD THE HOMELANDER TALKIN' ABOUT BACKIN' VOUGHT. WE KNOW WHAT FOR: USIN' THE LADS THEY GOT IN THE WHITE HOUSE TO REPLACE DAKOTA BOB WITH VIC. POINT O' WHICH IS SUPES IN THE--IS SUPES *BECOMIN'* THE MILITARY.
A SUPE COUP, JESUS CHRIST, BLOODY RIGHT WE'RE HAVIN' A GO...

FRENCHIE SAID HE SAW A MAJOR FUCKIN' POW-WOW GOIN' ON UP ABOVE BELIEVE. THESE ARE SERIOUS NUMBERS WE TALKIN' HERE.
SEVEN'RE THE KEY. WE NOBBLE THE BIG BOYS, THE OTHER CUNTS'LL JUST FALL APART.
AN' THIS IS THE TIME TO DO IT, WHEN WE A MAN DOWN?

YEAH, WELL IT DON'T LOOK LIKE WE GOT MUCH CHOICE. YOU SAW HUGHIE BEFORE HE FUCKED OFF, DID YOU TRY AN' GET HIM TO STAY?
NO...

I JUST REMEMBER LAST TIME. I MEAN GOIN' UP AGAINST THESE MUTHAFUCKAS--I AIN'T SCAREDA DYIN', FUCK THAT, BUT THE SHIT THEY GOT IT'LL BE DONE IN GODDAMN SECONDS.
ALL GONNA BE FOR NOTHIN', KNOWUMSAYIN'?

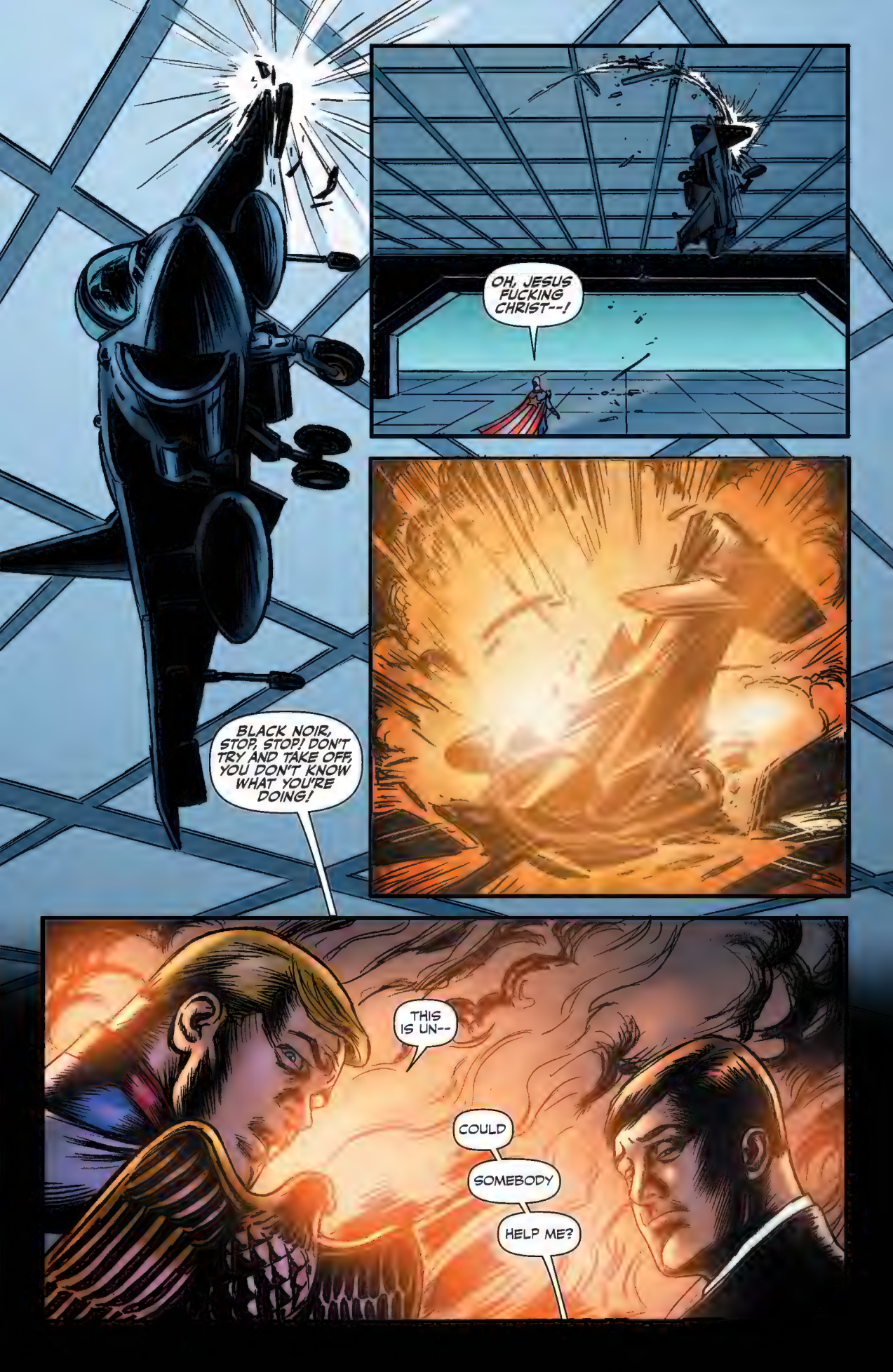
THAT'D BE ONE TO AVOID, ALL RIGHT. WHICH IS WHY I WANNA GO OVER THE--
HELLO...!

MONKEY?
I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME SHOWING MYSELF IN...
WHAT THE FUCK'RE YOU DOIN' HERE?

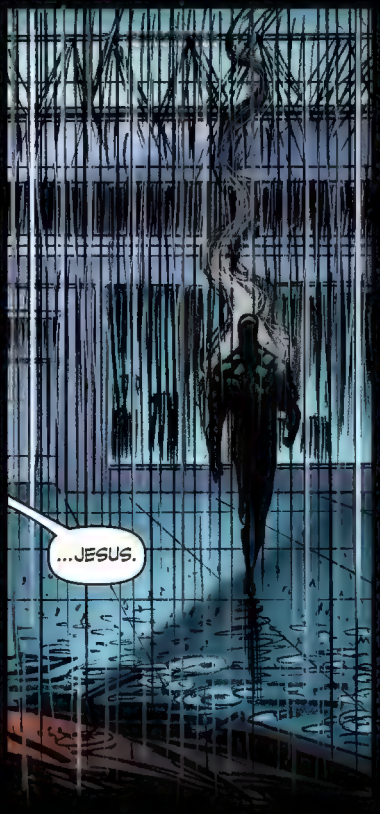
AN' WHY THE FUCK'RE YOU SMILIN'...?

DON'T WORRY, SHE CALLS EVERYONE THAT! QUITE A CHARACTER, OUR MAEVE!
I DO HOPE YOU'VE ENJOYED YOUR VISIT TODAY, IF THERE'S ANYTHING ELSE YOU NEED PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO ASK...
OKAY, YOU'VE GOT POWER! NOW YOU NEED TO BRING UP THE ENGINES!
ONCE YOU'VE DONE THAT, YOU'RE GOING TO SET THE THROTTLE TO IDLE AND LOCK THE WHEELS! THEN YOU'RE GOING TO SET THE THRUST VECTOR TO NINETY DEGREES, JUST LIKE I SHOWED YOU!
THEN--AND ONLY THEN--YOU'LL OPEN THE THROTTLE AND LEVEL OFF AT ABOUT, LET'S SAY FIVE FEET, OKAY?
OKAY? YOU GETTING ALL THIS?
ARE YOU GETTING ANY OF IT...?
IS HE ALL RIGHT?
UH...THAT'S KIND OF THE MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION.
I'VE BEEN WORKING WITH HIM FOR THREE DAYS, AND I'VE NO IDEA IF HE'S TAKEN IN A WORD I'VE SAID...

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU--
NO!

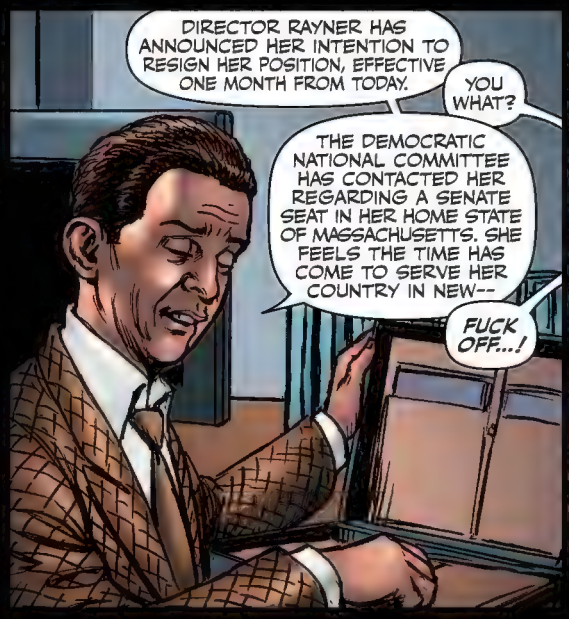

OH, JESUS FUCKING CHRIST--!
BLACK NOIR, STOP, STOP! DON'T TRY AND TAKE OFF, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!
THIS IS UN--
COULD
SOMEBODY
HELP ME?

PLEASE?

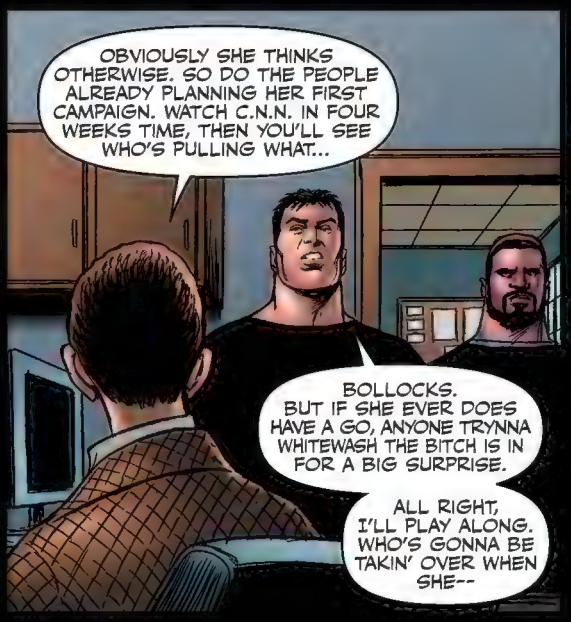

...JESUS.

THIS IS JUST WHAT WE FUCKING NEED.

WELL, THERE GOES MY BLOODY DAY, ANYWAY.
HEH HEH HEHNN...
OI! WHO TOLD YOU YOU COULD SIT DOWN?

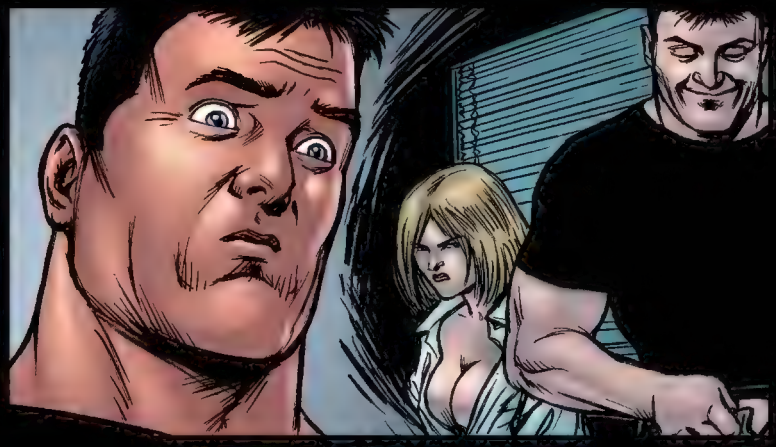

DIRECTOR RAYNER HAS ANNOUNCED HER INTENTION TO RESIGN HER POSITION, EFFECTIVE ONE MONTH FROM TODAY.
YOU WHAT?
THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE HAS CONTACTED HER REGARDING A SENATE SEAT IN HER HOME STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS. SHE FEELS THE TIME HAS COME TO SERVE HER COUNTRY IN NEW--
FUCK OFF...!

RAYNER CAN'T GO INTO POLITICS, SHE'S GOT MORE SHIT ON HER THAN ELTON JOHN'S COCK! SHE'S LUCKY SHE AIN'T UP FOR WAR CRIMES AFTER THAT CARRY-ON IN AFGHANISTAN!
PULL THE OTHER ONE, MONKEY, IT'S GOT FUCKIN' BELLS ON...!


OBVIOUSLY SHE THINKS OTHERWISE. SO DO THE PEOPLE ALREADY PLANNING HER FIRST CAMPAIGN. WATCH C.N.N. IN FOUR WEEKS TIME, THEN YOU'LL SEE WHO'S PULLING WHAT...
BOLLOCKS. BUT IF SHE EVER DOES HAVE A GO, ANYONE TRYNNA WHITEWASH THE BITCH IS IN FOR A BIG SURPRISE.
ALL RIGHT, I'LL PLAY ALONG. WHO'S GONNA BE TAKIN' OVER WHEN SHE--

...NO.

SHE WOULDN'T.
SHE JUST--
SHE



OH, FUCK.
HEH HEH HEH HEH HEHHNN...!

IT'S ONLY A CARETAKER POSITION, OF COURSE, THEY'RE ALREADY LOOKING AT A NUMBER OF CANDIDATES TO TAKE OVER ON A PERMANENT BASIS. BUT DIRECTOR RAYNER FEELS THAT IF I APPLY MYSELF--WELL, WHO KNOWS WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN?
TO THAT END, I'VE DECIDED TO MAKE AS EARLY A START AS POSSIBLE...

WITH YOU. NOT TO PUT TOO FINE A POINT ON IT.
UPON REVIEWING YOUR RECENT RECORDS, I'VE NOTICED THAT YOU DON'T REALLY SEEM TO HAVE SUBMITTED ANY. OR NOT ENOUGH TO FORM A COHERENT PICTURE, ANYWAY.
I'M SEEING PLENTY OF EXPENSES *CLAIMS,* OF COURSE. THE OCCASIONAL AFTER-ACTION REPORT. WHAT I'M NOT SEEING--AT ALL--

ARE YOUR *ACCOUNTS*...
MUTHAFUCKA.

LARGE SUMS OF MONEY REGULARLY GO OUT--ON THE BASIS OF SOMEWHAT SCANT JUSTIFICATION FROM YOUR END. WITH THAT IN MIND, I'VE DRAFTED THESE CLAIMS FORMS FOR FUTURE OPERATIONS: SIMPLE, CLEAR, EASY TO READ AND USE, AND THOROUGHLY COMPREHENSIVE.
SO COMPREHENSIVE, IN FACT, THAT I'D ALSO LIKE TO SEE BACKDATED FORMS FOR ALL OF YOUR ACTIVITIES SINCE--
MONKEY.

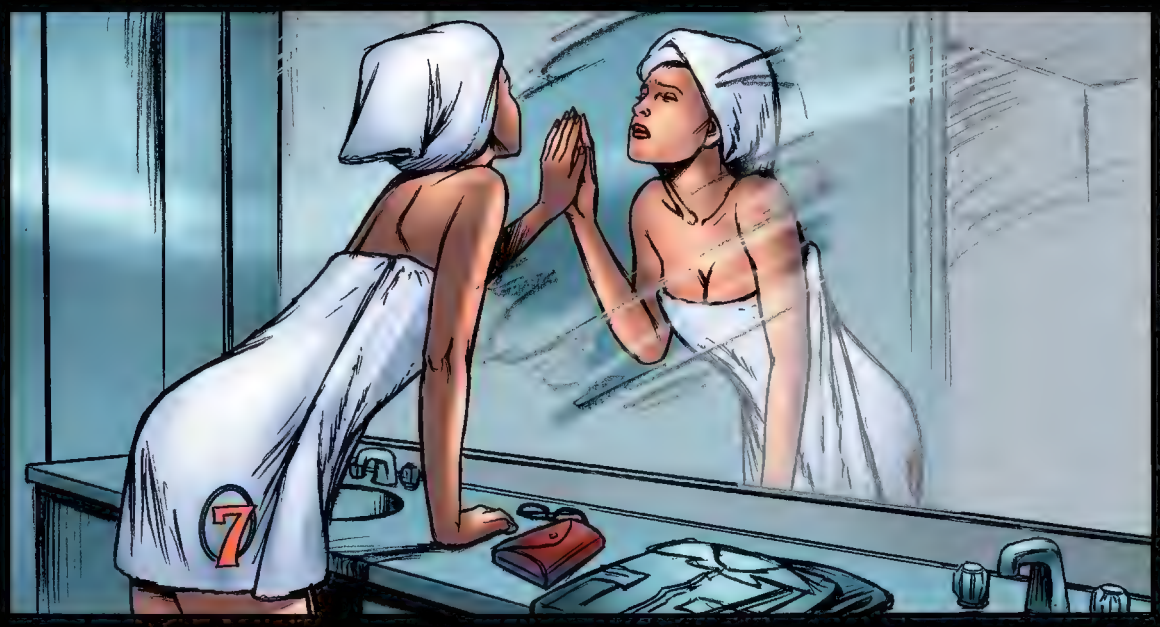
ALL BULLSHIT ASIDE.
YOU AIN'T TOO PLEASED WITH THE PAPERWORK UP 'TIL NOW, FAIR ENOUGH. BUT I GUARANTEE YOU'RE GONNA WANNA READ THE NEXT BIT.

DIRECTOR KESSLER.
W--
DIRECTOR KESSLER.
Y--
DIRECTOR KESSLER.

NO?
CAN'T MANAGE IT?
NOT EVEN A LITTLE ONE?

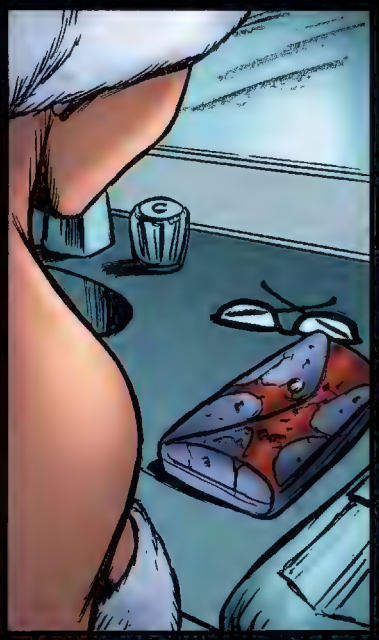
WELL, I'LL LEAVE YOU TO WORK ON THAT. AND ON THESE, OF COURSE.
I HAVE A TRAIN TO CATCH.

...I AM A BROKEN FUCKIN' MAN.


7

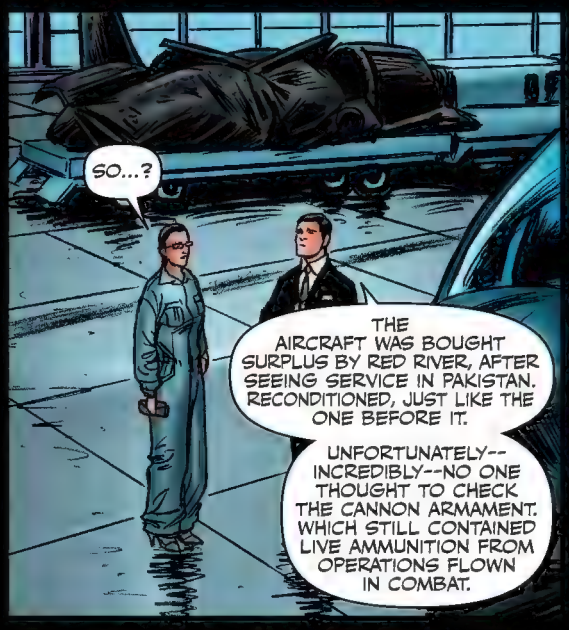
BE STRONG.

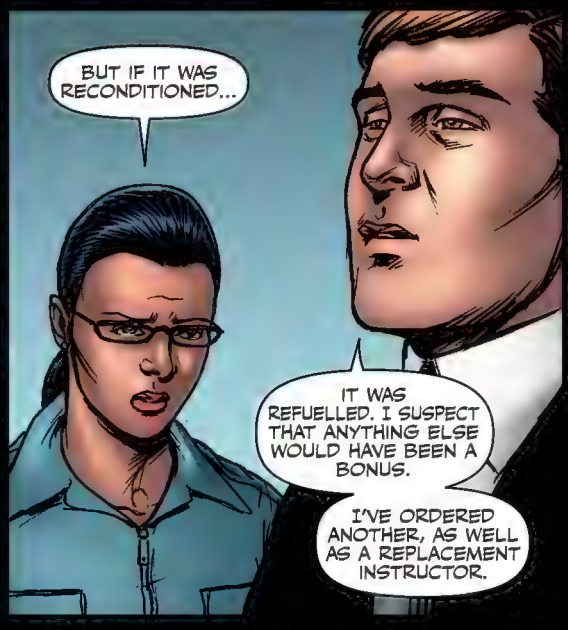
HE'S STRONG SO YOU'RE STRONG.
ONLY WAY.



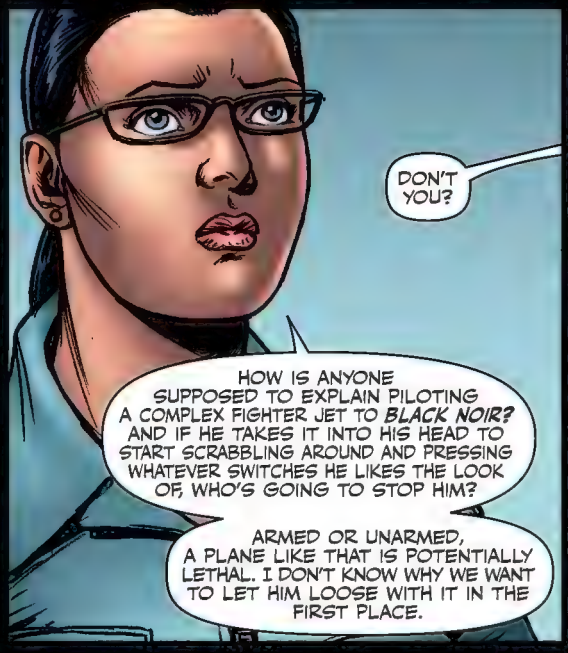
JESUS.

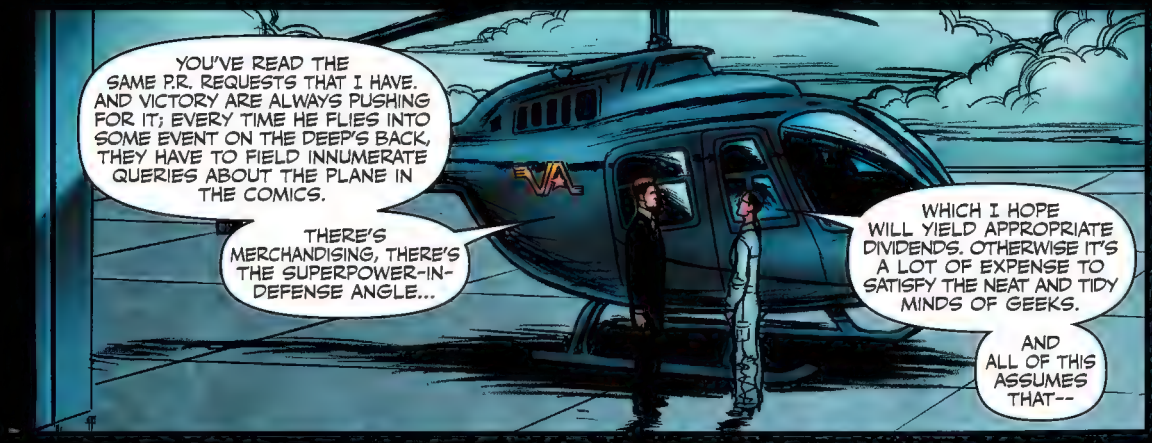
THAT WOULD CERTAINLY BE A START.
YES, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN. EVERYONE INVOLVED. EVERY NAME ON EVERY SIGN-OFF.
PLEASE DO.


SO...?
THE AIRCRAFT WAS BOUGHT SURPLUS BY RED RIVER, AFTER SEEING SERVICE IN PAKISTAN. RECONDITIONED, JUST LIKE THE ONE BEFORE IT.
UNFORTUNATELY--INCREDIBLY--NO ONE THOUGHT TO CHECK THE CANNON ARMAMENT. WHICH STILL CONTAINED LIVE AMMUNITION FROM OPERATIONS FLOWN IN COMBAT.


BUT IF IT WAS RECONDITIONED...
IT WAS REFUELLED. I SUSPECT THAT ANYTHING ELSE WOULD HAVE BEEN A BONUS.
I'VE ORDERED ANOTHER, AS WELL AS A REPLACEMENT INSTRUCTOR.

HOPEFULLY SOMEONE WHO CAN ACTUALLY DO THE JOB...
YOU REALLY THINK IT WAS HIS FAULT?


DON'T YOU?
HOW IS ANYONE SUPPOSED TO EXPLAIN PILOTING A COMPLEX FIGHTER JET TO *BLACK NOIR?* AND IF HE TAKES IT INTO HIS HEAD TO START SCRABBLING AROUND AND PRESSING WHATEVER SWITCHES HE LIKES THE LOOK OF, WHO'S GOING TO STOP HIM?
ARMED OR UNARMED, A PLANE LIKE THAT IS POTENTIALLY LETHAL. I DON'T KNOW WHY WE WANT TO LET HIM LOOSE WITH IT IN THE FIRST PLACE.

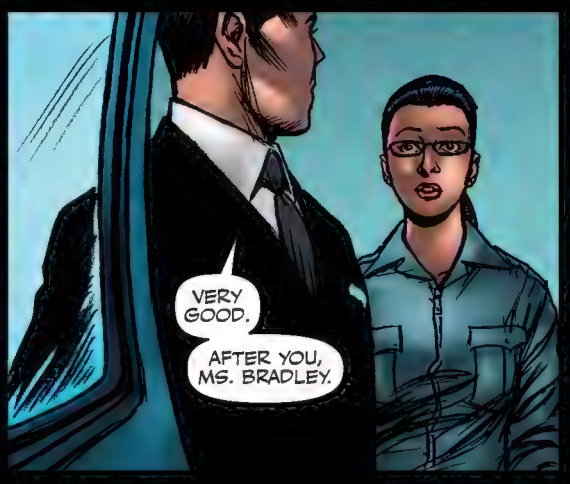

YOU'VE READ THE SAME P.R. REQUESTS THAT I HAVE. AND VICTORY ARE ALWAYS PUSHING FOR IT; EVERY TIME HE FLIES INTO SOME EVENT ON THE DEEP'S BACK, THEY HAVE TO FIELD INNUMERATE QUERIES ABOUT THE PLANE IN THE COMICS.
THERE'S MERCHANDISING, THERE'S THE SUPERPOWER-IN-DEFENSE ANGLE...
WHICH I HOPE WILL YIELD APPROPRIATE DIVIDENDS. OTHERWISE IT'S A LOT OF EXPENSE TO SATISFY THE NEAT AND TIDY MINDS OF GEEKS.
AND ALL OF THIS ASSUMES THAT--

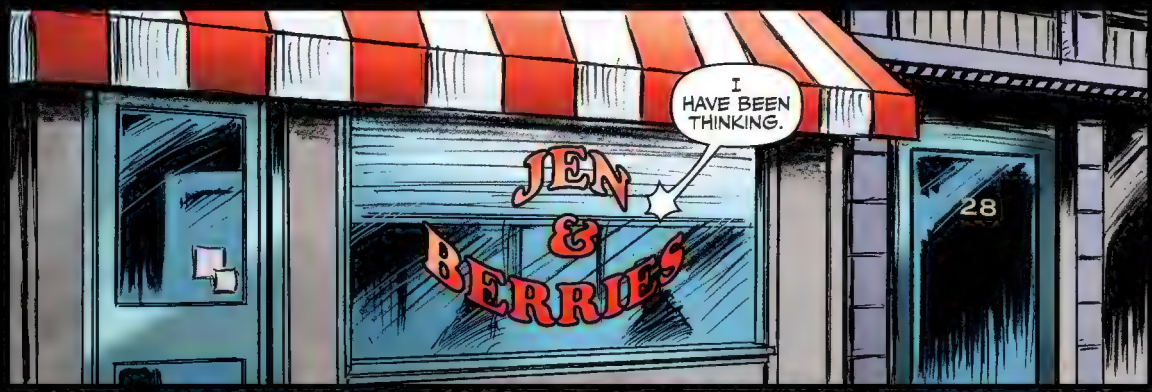
UM...
IF I'M... EXCEEDING MY...
GO ON.
YOU MAY AS WELL.

WELL...WE'RE ASSUMING THAT IT CAN ACTUALLY BE DONE. THAT HE CAN BE TAUGHT TO FLY.
THROWING MONEY AT A PROBLEM ISN'T LIKE A MAGIC SPELL. THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT SIMPLY CAN'T BE MADE TO WORK.

HMMM.

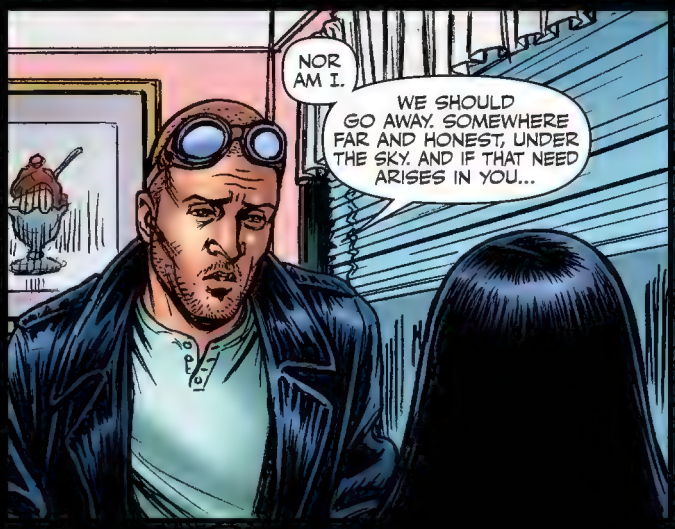
I AGREE. COMPLETELY, AS A MATTER OF FACT.
WHEN WE GET BACK, CONTACT RED RIVER AND CANCEL MY REQUEST FOR BOTH AIRCRAFT AND PILOT.


VERY GOOD.
AFTER YOU, MS. BRADLEY.

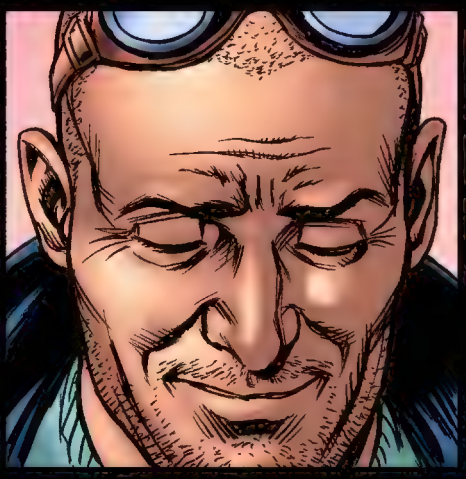

I HAVE BEEN THINKING.
JEN & BERRIES
28

I WONDER IF YOU AND I SHOULD GO AWAY QUITE SOON.
SOMETIMES I FEAR THE BOYS ARE ON A PATH THAT...

WELL.
WHEREVER THEY GO, THE LIFE IS BAD FOR YOU. SUPES OR GANGSTERS, THE NATURE OF THE TARGET DOES NOT MATTER: TO INDULGE THE FURY IN YOUR HEART IS BAD FOR YOU.
YOU ARE A HUMAN BEING, NOT A WEAPON. AND YOU ARE NOT RESPECTED AS YOU SHOULD BE.


NOR AM I.
WE SHOULD GO AWAY. SOMEWHERE FAR AND HONEST, UNDER THE SKY. AND IF THAT NEED ARISES IN YOU...

THERE IS ME.



next: KING OF HELL

DYNAMITE®
SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

Garth Ennis Russ Braun Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

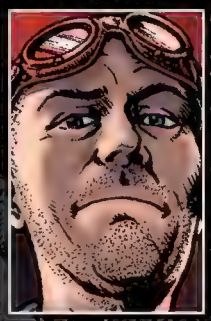
FORTY-NINE

Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

FORTY-NINE

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.



Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in The Boys.

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PROPER PREPARATION AND PLANNING

part two

WHY TELL ME?

WHAT...?
YOU SOUND LIKE YOU'RE TRYING TO CONVINCE YOURSELF OF SOMETHING.

MEANING?
WELL...I'M NO EXPERT, BUT WOULD A DEMIGOD BEYOND THE PATHETIC MORALITY OF MAN REALLY FEEL THE NEED TO DECLARE IT TO A MIRROR?

I SHOT DOWN AN AIRLINER, I SENT TWO HUNDRED PEOPLE TO THEIR DOOM. I DROPPED THAT FAMILY INTO THE OCEAN LIKE THEY WERE--
TOYS, YES. AS YOU SAID.

THAT IS WHAT I SAID.
I KNOW, I HEARD YOU. TOYS FOR YOUR AMUSEMENT, ALL THAT.
THEN WOULD YOU MIND TELLING ME WHAT *THAT* LOOK'S FOR...?

ARE YOU SCARED?

OF DISCOVERY, AND PUNISHMENT?
OF WHAT IT MEANS YOU ARE?
OF THE NOTION, BY ANY SANE MEASURE OF MORALITY--

THAT YOU'VE DONE SOMETHING CATASTROPHIC?

NO... NO...
I HAVE A THEORY OF MY OWN, IF YOU'RE INTERESTED. I THINK YOU'RE TRYING TO IMPRESS DADDY.

WHAT?
OH, YES, WHATEVER CAN I MEAN?

WHAT THE HELL'RE YOU--?

...NO.

YOU POUT. YOU POSTURE. SOMETIMES YOU SCORE A POINT OR TWO. BUT IT NEVER SEEMS TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE; HE JUST WON'T TRULY ACKNOWLEDGE YOU, WILL HE?
UNLESS HE NEEDS SOMETHING FROM YOU, LIKE WITH VIC AT HEROGASM, AND THEN YOU'RE AN ADULT FOR FIVE WHOLE MINUTES. BUT ON THE WHOLE IT'S...ONE LONG CRINGE OF A MEMORY...

HE LEAVES. YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU SHOULD HAVE SAID, FIVE MINUTES LATER.
JUST LIKE A KID WITH A PARENT.

THAT'S-- YOU--
THE JET, THE MULLERS, EVERYTHING I'M PLANNING, THAT'S ALL JUST TO IMPRESS HIM--?
IN A WAY, MAYBE. "BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW I WAS CAPABLE."
YOU WERE CERTAINLY VERY ACCOMODATING WITH HIM YESTERDAY, WEREN'T YOU?
WELL, NOW YOU REALLY ARE REACHING. A FOOL COULD SEE I WAS PUTTING HIM AT EASE, I WAS PLAYING THE SIMPLEST OF ROLES...
WELL, I THINK WE BOTH KNOW IT'S ONE YOU EXCEL AT. YOU GET FIVE-STAR REVIEWS SEASON AFTER SEASON.
REALLY INHABITING THE PART, IN THE FINEST TRADITION OF THE METHOD. BRAVO.
FUCKING--!
YES, GO ON! THAT'S WHAT SANE MEN DO, RIGHT?
PUNCH THEIR REFLECTION IN A MIRROR...?
MERDE.

ALL RIGHT, SO WHERE THE FUCK ARE THEY? *HELLO?*

WONDERFUL. THEY'VE PISSED OFF.
A SPECIAL FORCES TEAM DOES NOT LEAVE WITHOUT ORDERS. THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO DEPLOY BACK HERE, WATCH US OUT ON THE ICE.

THIS PLACE FLOODED OR SOMETHIN'? AN' WHAT IS UP WIT' THAT GODDAMN SMELL?
OH, MON DIEU.
M'SIEU MALLORY, LA FEMME EST EN ETAT D'ALERTE. I BELIEVE--

THAT WE ARE STANDING IN THEM.

ALL RIGHT, SOMEONE FIND THE FUCKIN' LIGHT SW--
THAT'S ALL RIGHT, WE'VE GOT IT.

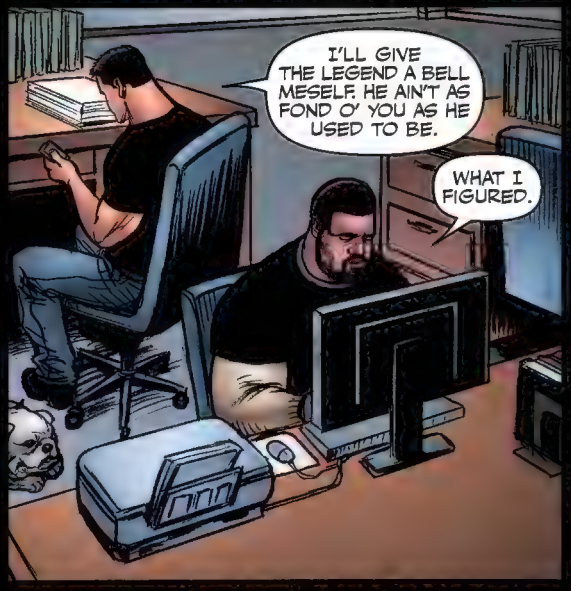
WHAT DO YOU SAY WE GET DOWN TO BUSINESS?

PENNY FOR YOUR SHIT.
MM? OH.
JUST THINKIN' ABOUT...MONKEY AN' HIS BLOODY FORMS...

PAGE EIGHTY-NINE.
DAILY NEWS
YANKS!

PARALYMPIC CHAMP TO B
HONORED BY PRESIDENT
Gold medalist Nikki Brand "ecstatic" over White House visit
HMH...!

NICE ONE.
COULD USE THE V.A. PASSWORD FOR TODAY. MIGHT MAKE THE DIFFERENCE WIT' THIS HOMELANDER SHIT.
DAILY NEWS
YANKS!
DAILY NEWS
LILO BUSTED AGAIN


I'LL GIVE THE LEGEND A BELL MESELF. HE AIN'T AS FOND O' YOU AS HE USED TO BE.
WHAT I FIGURED.

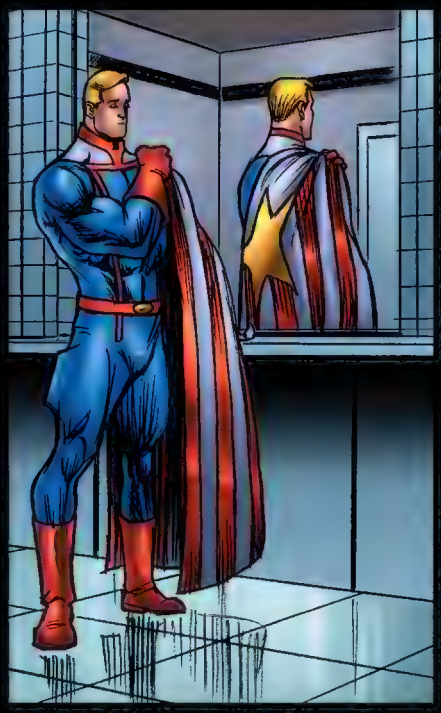
NOW, THIS JET.
AND THIS FAMILY.
STOP IT...
STOP... IT...

THESE THINGS YOU'RE SO PROUD OF. HOW COME YOU CAN REMEMBER DOING THEM...
BUT NOT THE THINGS YOU'RE DOING IN BUTCHER'S PHOTOS?

AND COME TO THAT, WHAT ABOUT THIS WIFE OF HIS? OH, YOU FIGURED OUT YOU DID SOMETHING, YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR HER DEATH--BUT FOR THE LIFE OF YOU, YOU CAN'T WORK OUT HOW.
YOU'VE BEEN WRACKING YOUR BRAIN ABOUT THAT ONE, HAVEN'T YOU?

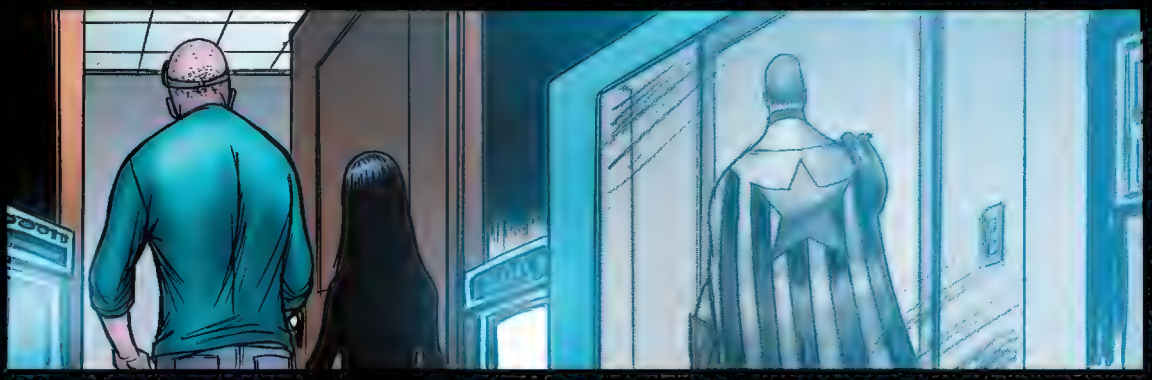
I AM TELLING YOU TO ST--

THIS IS STUPID.
I'M NOT MAD.
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO NEXT, INVENT A SPECIAL EVIL VOICE FOR THE PARTS I DON'T LIKE HEARING?



I MUST SPEAK TO M'SIEU CHARCUTER.

WILL YOU COME TOO?
CONSIDERING THE SUBJECT MATTER, I WOULD BE GLAD OF THE...MORAL SUPPORT?



VERY WELL THEN, I'LL BE RATIONAL.

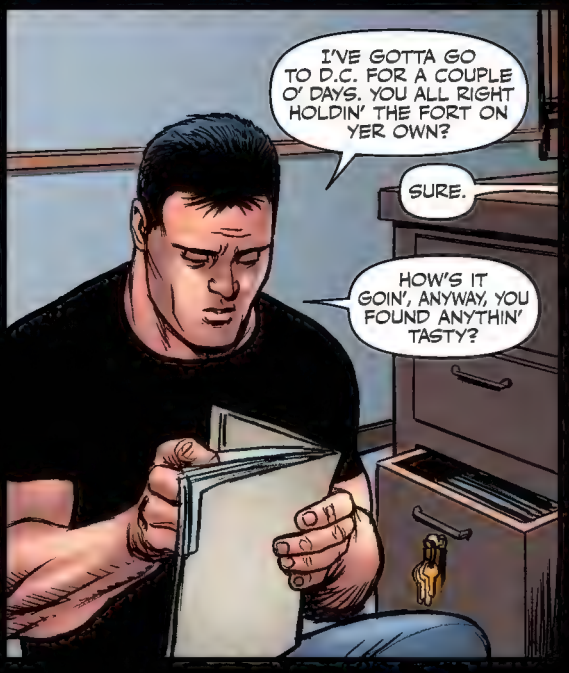
THE PICTURES: ONCE YOU INSTIGATE THIS PLAN OF YOURS, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WHEN BUTCHER SHOWS THEM TO THE WORLD?

WELL, AT THAT POINT HE'LL BE TOO LATE, WON'T HE?
I'LL BE KING OF HELL.

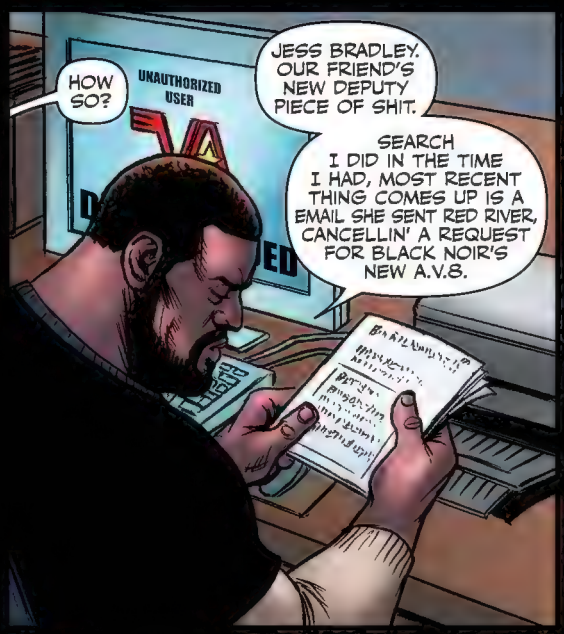
...YOUR DIRECTIVE TO MONITOR THEM CONSTANTLY IS PAYING OFF. REVIEWING THE TAPES, WE MIGHT NOT HAVE KNOWN UNTIL TOMORROW.
SO WHY AIN'T YOU STILL AT IT, THEN?

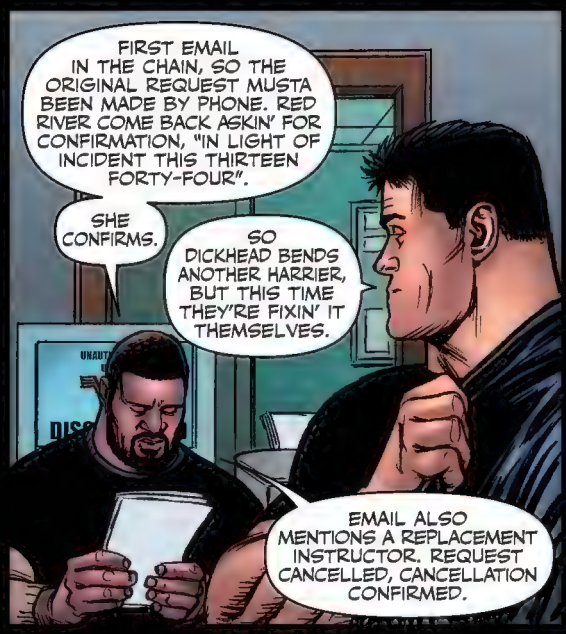
M'SIEU?
WELL YOU AIN'T WATCHIN' THEM NOW, ARE YOU? HOW D'YOU KNOW THEY AIN'T UP TO SOMETHIN' RIGHT THIS MINUTE?
I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO KNOW AT ONCE...
SO LEAVE HER TO KEEP AN EYE ON THEM FOR YOU. COME ON, FRENCHIE, SHOW A BIT OF INITIATIVE, SON...

AS YOU WISH.


I'VE GOTTA GO TO D.C. FOR A COUPLE O' DAYS. YOU ALL RIGHT HOLDIN' THE FORT ON YER OWN?
SURE.
HOW'S IT GOIN', ANYWAY, YOU FOUND ANYTHIN' TASTY?

MIGHTA DONE.


HOW SO?
UNAUTHORIZED USER
JESS BRADLEY. OUR FRIEND'S NEW DEPUTY PIECE OF SHIT.
SEARCH I DID IN THE TIME I HAD, MOST RECENT THING COMES UP IS A EMAIL SHE SENT RED RIVER, CANCELLIN' A REQUEST FOR BLACK NOIR'S NEW A.V.8.


FIRST EMAIL IN THE CHAIN, SO THE ORIGINAL REQUEST MUSTA BEEN MADE BY PHONE. RED RIVER COME BACK ASKIN' FOR CONFIRMATION, "IN LIGHT OF INCIDENT THIS THIRTEEN FORTY-FOUR".
SHE CONFIRMS.
SO DICKHEAD BENDS ANOTHER HARRIER, BUT THIS TIME THEY'RE FIXIN' IT THEMSELVES.
EMAIL ALSO MENTIONS A REPLACEMENT INSTRUCTOR. REQUEST CANCELLED, CANCELLATION CONFIRMED.

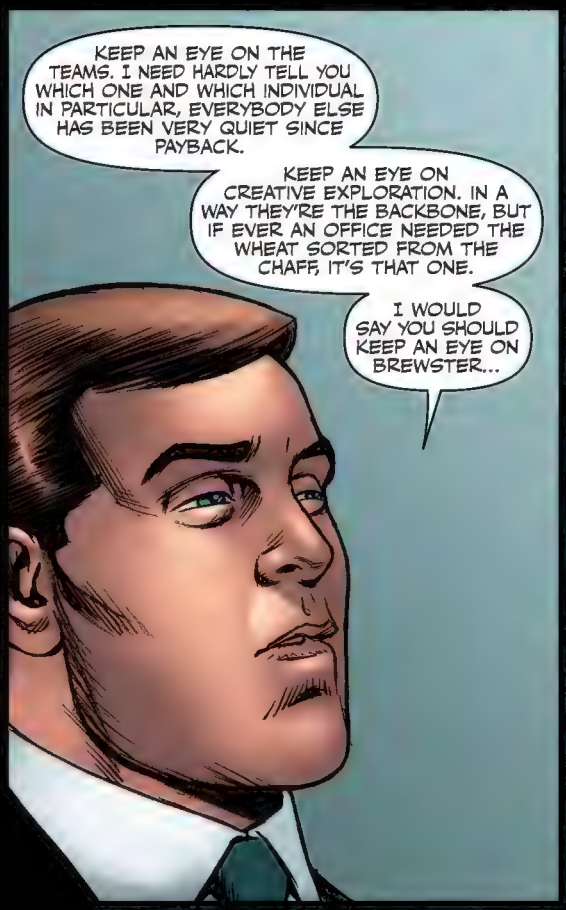
SO...THEY THINK HE NEEDS TO BRUSH UP ON HIS FLYIN'. THEN THEY CHANGE THEIR MINDS.
REPLACEMENT? WHO FOR?
I DUNNO, THE FIRST BLOKE. WHO QUITS 'COS...BLACK NOIR'S A FUCKIN' HOPELESS CUNT.

THEN WHY CANCEL THE NEW INSTRUCTOR?
HOW DOES A DUDE BEEN FLYIN' OVER THIRTY YEARS *NEED* INSTRUCTION, ANYHOW?

SOUNDS A BIT THIN TO ME, MATE...
GOT TWO SEPARATE IDENT CODES ON THE PRIORITY CLASSIFICATION. *J.B. OH-TWO-TWO* GOTTA BE BRADLEY. OTHER IS *F.S. OH-OH-OH.*
IT DON'T MEAN SHIT, IT DON'T MEAN SHIT. BUT IT SHOWS UP IN OTHER VOUGHT COMMUNICATIONS--AN' THE SUBJECT IS THE SAME EACH TIME--I'M GONNA KNOW WHO IT BELONGS TO.

AN' YOUR MONEY'S ON BLACK NOIR?
MUTHAFUCKA GOT ME CURIOUS, IS ALL.
BE SEEIN' YOU.

BUT THIS IS YOUR OFFICE...
IT WAS.
IT IS.
WITH EXTRA RESPONSIBILITY COMES SENIORITY. AND A BETTER VIEW.
SO WHAT D'YOU MEAN IT'S MINE?
EXTRA? ARE YOU--
OH NO, SORRY. OF COURSE NOT.
YOU'LL BE TAKING ON MORE OF THE DAY-TO-DAY RUNNING OF THINGS. YOU'LL STILL BE BASED HERE, YOU'LL STILL REPORT TO ME, BUT YOU'LL HAVE GREATER AUTONOMY WHEN IT COMES TO MAKING DECISIONS.
I BELIEVE YOU'RE READY. I BELIEVE YOU THINK SO TOO, SO WE CAN PROBABLY DISPENSE WITH THE NEXT THIRTY-SOMETHING SECONDS OF CONVERSATION.
HMH.
MY RESPONSIBILITIES WOULD BE...WHAT YOURS ARE NOW?
VERY MUCH SO.


KEEP AN EYE ON THE TEAMS. I NEED HARDLY TELL YOU WHICH ONE AND WHICH INDIVIDUAL IN PARTICULAR, EVERYBODY ELSE HAS BEEN VERY QUIET SINCE PAYBACK.
KEEP AN EYE ON CREATIVE EXPLORATION. IN A WAY THEY'RE THE BACKBONE, BUT IF EVER AN OFFICE NEEDED THE WHEAT SORTED FROM THE CHAFF, IT'S THAT ONE.
I WOULD SAY YOU SHOULD KEEP AN EYE ON BREWSTER...

BUT...BLIND HIM WITH SCIENCE?
MM.
OF COURSE, IF YOU REALLY WANTED TO IMPRESS, YOU COULD TRY SOLVING THE ONE CONUNDRUM NO ONE'S BEEN ABLE TO YET:

BUTCHER AND COMPANY.
YOU NEVER CAN TELL.

HUH. WELL.
SO WHERE WILL YOU BE, WHILE I'M...?

D.C.

OF COURSE.
I EXPECT I'LL STILL SEE YOU. FROM TIME TO TIME.

I CAN'T IMAGINE WHY NOT.

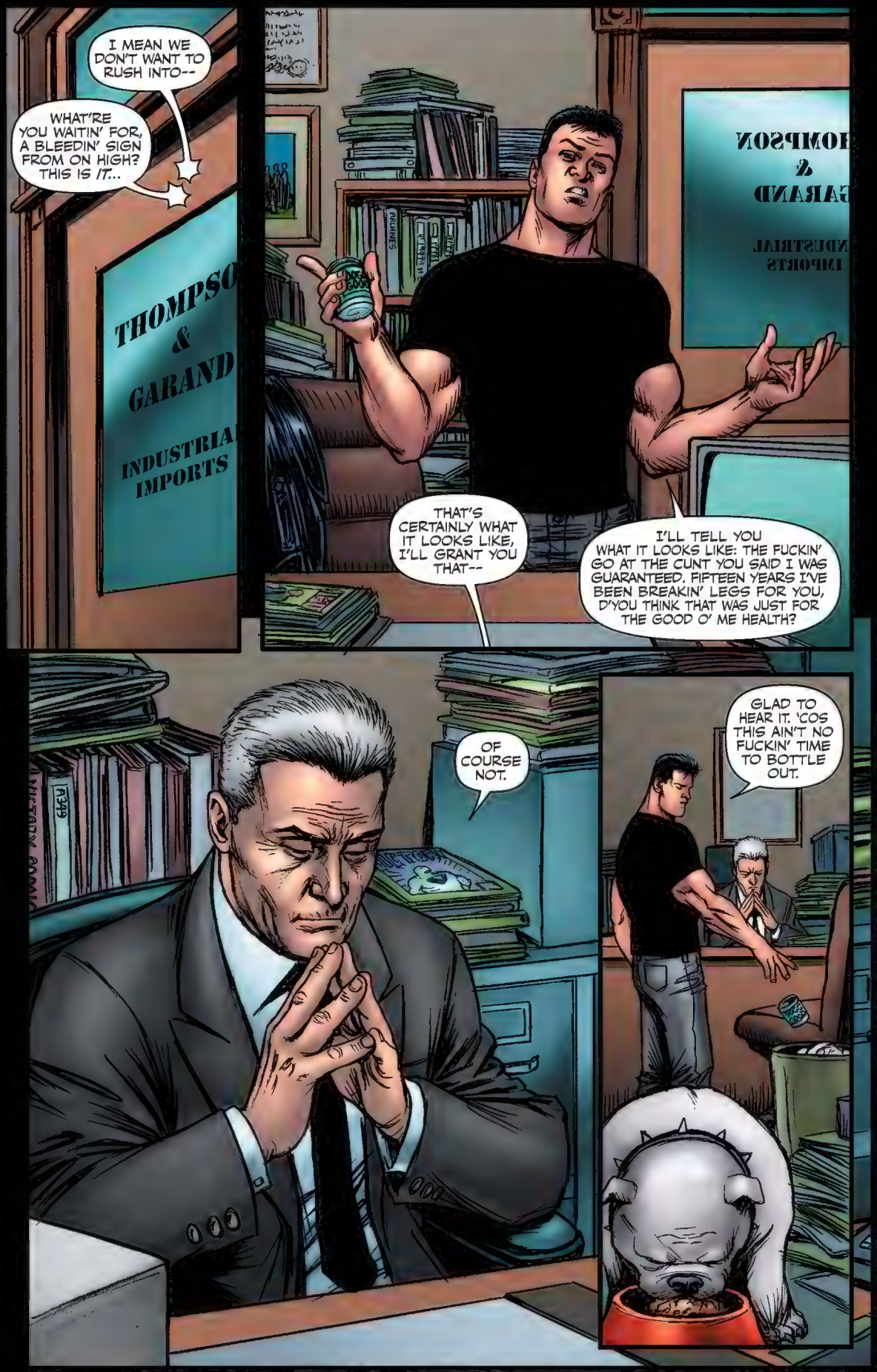
EXCUSE ME, BUT WHY DOES THAT MAN HAVE... *THAT?*
HOMELAND SECURITY, MA'AM.
Amtrak

THAT'S ALL I'M AUTHORIZED TO SAY.

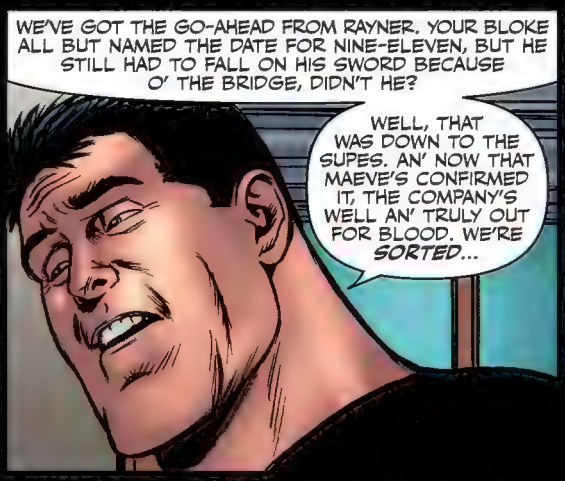
ALL RIGHT THERE, MATE?

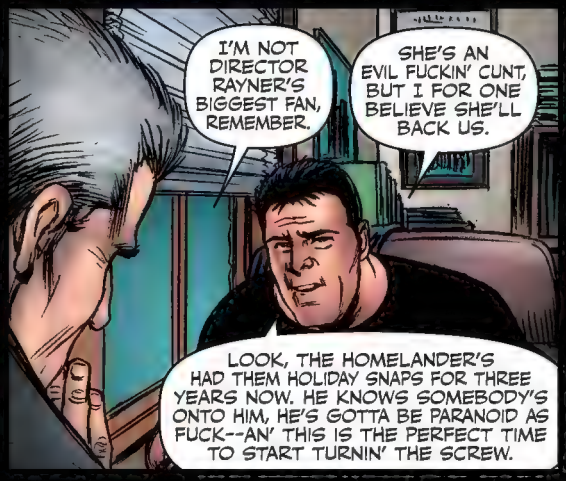
YOU SAT THE LAST ONE OUT, DIDN'T YOU, SON?
YEAH, I LEFT YOU BEHIND.

MAYBE I HAD A FEELIN'.
EVEN THEN.
WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU MEAN, *MAYBE, MAYBE NOT?*

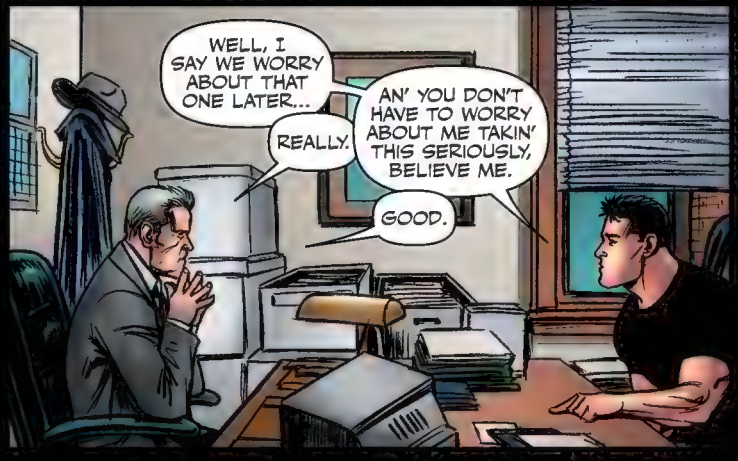

I MEAN WE DON'T WANT TO RUSH INTO--
WHAT'RE YOU WAITIN' FOR, A BLEEDIN' SIGN FROM ON HIGH? THIS IS IT...
THOMPSO & GARAND INDUSTRIA IMPORTS
THAT'S CERTAINLY WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE, I'LL GRANT YOU THAT--
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE: THE FUCKIN' GO AT THE CUNT YOU SAID I WAS GUARANTEED. FIFTEEN YEARS I'VE BEEN BREAKIN' LEGS FOR YOU, D'YOU THINK THAT WAS JUST FOR THE GOOD O' ME HEALTH?
OF COURSE NOT.
GLAD TO HEAR IT. 'COS THIS AIN'T NO FUCKIN' TIME TO BOTTLE OUT.

YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW ME BETTER THAN THAT.
AN' YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW WHAT THIS BLOODY MEANS TO ME. NOW LET'S KNOCK THIS BOLLOCKS ON THE HEAD AN' GET DOWN TO BUSINESS, EH?

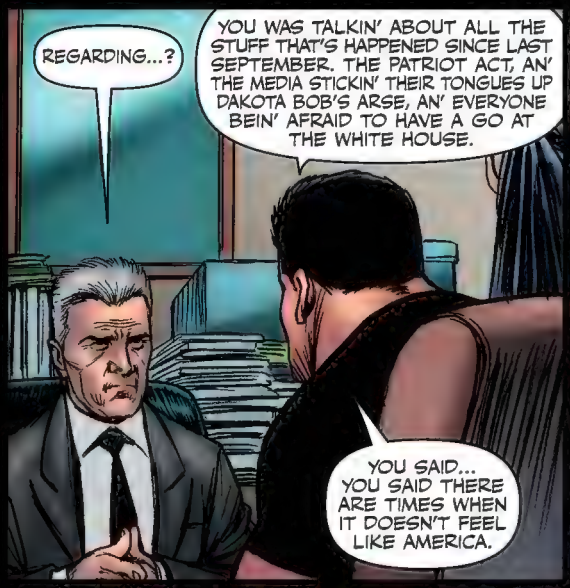

WE'VE GOT THE GO-AHEAD FROM RAYNER. YOUR BLOKE ALL BUT NAMED THE DATE FOR NINE-ELEVEN, BUT HE STILL HAD TO FALL ON HIS SWORD BECAUSE O' THE BRIDGE, DIDN'T HE?
WELL, THAT WAS DOWN TO THE SUPES. AN' NOW THAT MAEVE'S CONFIRMED IT, THE COMPANY'S WELL AN' TRULY OUT FOR BLOOD. WE'RE *SORTED*...

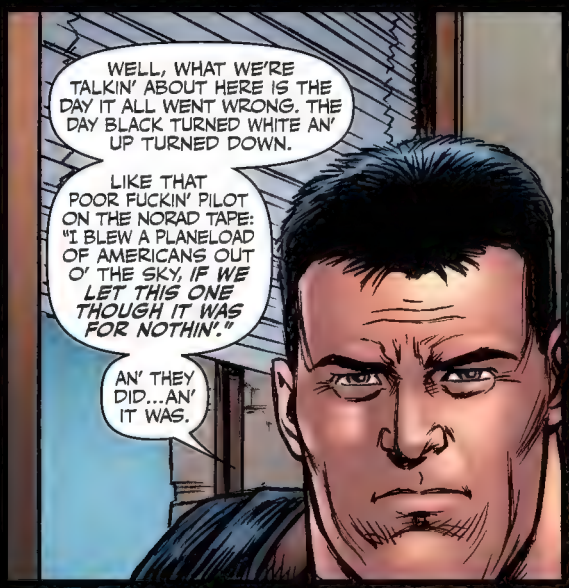

I'M NOT DIRECTOR RAYNER'S BIGGEST FAN, REMEMBER.
SHE'S AN EVIL FUCKIN' CUNT, BUT I FOR ONE BELIEVE SHE'LL BACK US.
LOOK, THE HOMELANDER'S HAD THEM HOLIDAY SNAPS FOR THREE YEARS NOW. HE KNOWS SOMEBODY'S ONTO HIM, HE'S GOTTA BE PARANOID AS FUCK--AN' THIS IS THE PERFECT TIME TO START TURNIN' THE SCREW.

I KNOW YOU HAVE EVERY REASON TO DESPISE THE HOMELANDER, BUT DON'T LET THAT BLIND YOU TO JUST HOW DANGEROUS HE IS. I'D BE A LOT MORE CONFIDENT IF I THOUGHT YOU WERE TAKING THIS MORE SERIOUSLY.
AND WE STILL DON'T KNOW WHO SENT THE C.I.A. THOSE PICTURES IN THE FIRST PLACE, DON'T FORGET.

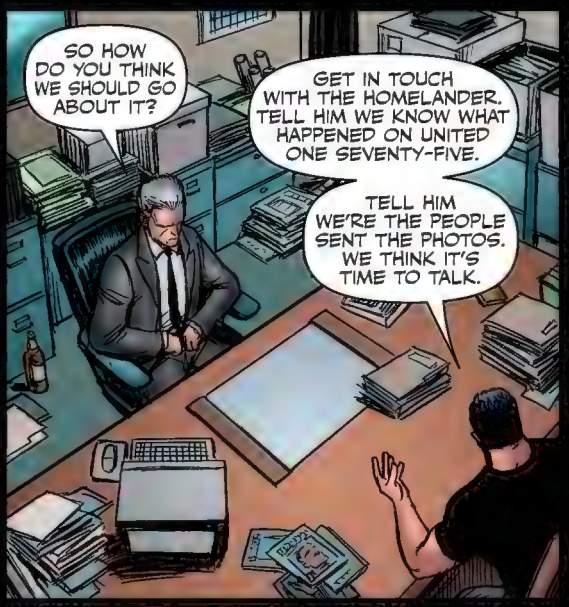

WELL, I SAY WE WORRY ABOUT THAT ONE LATER...
REALLY.
AN' YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME TAKIN' THIS SERIOUSLY, BELIEVE ME.
GOOD.

HMH.
D'YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU SAID TO ME A COUPLE O' DAYS AGO?


REGARDING...?
YOU WAS TALKIN' ABOUT ALL THE STUFF THAT'S HAPPENED SINCE LAST SEPTEMBER. THE PATRIOT ACT, AN' THE MEDIA STICKIN' THEIR TONGUES UP DAKOTA BOB'S ARSE, AN' EVERYONE BEIN' AFRAID TO HAVE A GO AT THE WHITE HOUSE.
YOU SAID... YOU SAID THERE ARE TIMES WHEN IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE AMERICA.


WELL, WHAT WE'RE TALKIN' ABOUT HERE IS THE DAY IT ALL WENT WRONG. THE DAY BLACK TURNED WHITE AN' UP TURNED DOWN.
LIKE THAT POOR FUCKIN' PILOT ON THE NORAD TAPE: "I BLEW A PLANELOAD OF AMERICANS OUT O' THE SKY, IF WE LET THIS ONE THOUGH IT WAS FOR NOTHIN'."
AN' THEY DID...AN' IT WAS.

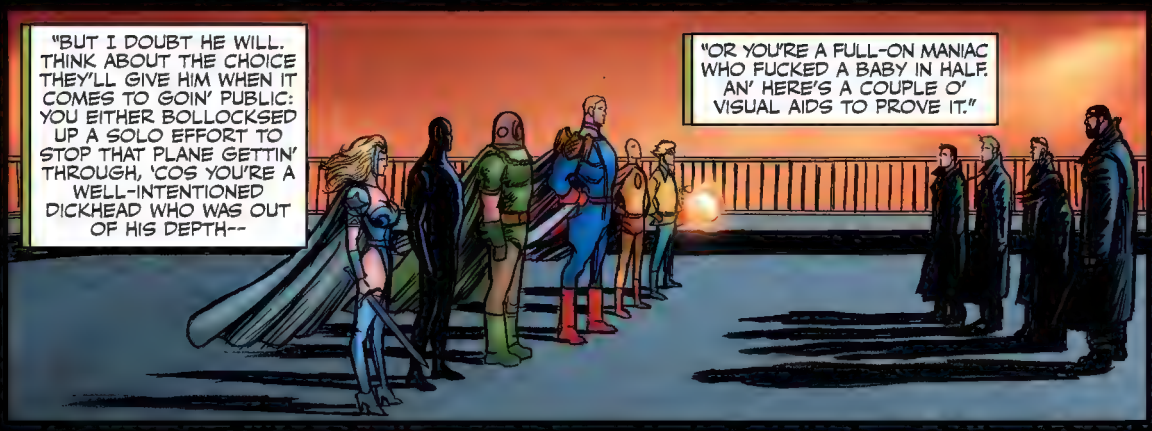
DON'T YOU WANNA MAKE SOMEONE ANSWER FOR ALL O' THAT?


SO HOW DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD GO ABOUT IT?
GET IN TOUCH WITH THE HOMELANDER. TELL HIM WE KNOW WHAT HAPPENED ON UNITED ONE SEVENTY-FIVE.
TELL HIM WE'RE THE PEOPLE SENT THE PHOTOS. WE THINK IT'S TIME TO TALK.

WE MEET THE SEVEN. WE LET 'EM GET A LOOK AT US. JUST SO THEY KNOW THERE'S SOMEONE WATCHIN'; THAT THIS MOB THE OTHER SUPES GO ON ABOUT ARE REAL.
WE TELL 'EM SOMEONE'S GETTIN' THROWN TO THE WOLVES FOR NINE-ELEVEN. WE DECIDE TOMORROW--

"OR YOU DECIDE TODAY."
AND YOU THINK THEY'LL CHOOSE THE HOMELANDER...?
THEY WILL ONCE THEY GET A LOAD O' THEM BLEEDIN' PHOTOS.

"IF YOU THINK I OR MOTHER'S MILK OR ANYBODY ELSE IS GOING TO BE AT GROUND ZERO WHEN HE REALIZES HE'S--"
"WELL NO, WE AIN'T GONNA DO IT LIKE THAT, ARE WE? I MEAN THE FIRST THING THEY'RE GONNA ASK IS WHY THEY SHOULDN'T JUST FILLET US THERE AN' THEN, AN' WE'RE GONNA SAY--ASK HIM."
"MEANING THE HOMELANDER."
"EX-ACTLY. AN' HE'S GONNA KNOW WHAT WE MEAN, SO HE'LL SHUT HIS TRAP ON THE SPOT.
"HE'LL TWIG WE'VE GOT COPIES O' THE PICS STRAIGHTAWAY--WHAT HE WON'T KNOW IS, WE'LL ALREADY'VE SENT A SET TO VOUGHT..."
"SO THEY GO HOME... CONFER WITH VOUGHT...AND A MUTUAL DECISION WILL BE MADE TO GIVE HIM UP?"
"BY WHICH STAGE WE'LL BE MILES AWAY."
"AND IF HE BUCKS?"
"THAT AIN'T OUR PROBLEM."


"BUT I DOUBT HE WILL. THINK ABOUT THE CHOICE THEY'LL GIVE HIM WHEN IT COMES TO GOIN' PUBLIC: YOU EITHER BOLLOCKSED UP A SOLO EFFORT TO STOP THAT PLANE GETTIN' THROUGH, 'COS YOU'RE A WELL-INTENTIONED DICKHEAD WHO WAS OUT OF HIS DEPTH--
"OR YOU'RE A FULL-ON MANIAC WHO FUCKED A BABY IN HALF. AN' HERE'S A COUPLE O' VISUAL AIDS TO PROVE IT."

"AND THEN...?"
"AN' THEN THEY PUT HIM OUT TO PASTURE. WHO KNOWS, MAYBE WHOEVER CALLED THE FIGHTERS OFF GETS NERVOUS, AN' VOUGHT HAVE TO PULL THE PLUG COMPLETELY--I DOUBT THEY'VE GOT A CUNT LIKE THAT WALKIN' AROUND WITHOUT A WAY TO DROP HIM IF IT COMES TO IT.
"AN' EVEN IF THEY DON'T...I'LL FIND ONE SOONER OR LATER."

"DON'T FORGET THAT IF THEY DECIDE TO TAKE THE MEETING AT ALL, THEY'LL BE BRIEFED BY VOUGHT BEFOREHAND. VERY THOROUGHLY INDEED, I WOULD IMAGINE.
"AND THEN THERE'S...WELL, THERE'S THE WILD CARD NO ONE EVER FORESEES. THIS MIGHT NOT GO THE WAY YOU'RE SCRIPTING IT AT ALL."

WHEN DOES IT?
I JUST...
HHHH.

OKAY.

IS THAT IT?
IT IS.
THEN WE'RE GOING TO LEAVE NOW.
YOU'LL KNOW OUR DECISION SOON ENOUGH.

WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT THE FUCK *IS THIS*--?

WHO ARE THESE PRICKS? WHY DO THEY THINK THEY CAN TREAT US LIKE THIS? AND WHAT DID THAT MEAN, THAT SHIT ABOUT ASKING YOU?
LAMPLIGHTER, LET'S JUST--
FUCK THAT SHIT!

I GOT MY FUCKING RIBS CAVED IN THAT DAY! I NEARLY DIED UP THERE, TRYING TO STOP THAT GODDAMNED PLANE! AND YOU'RE TELLING ME THESE NOBODIES, THESE FUCKING COCKSUCKING NOBODIES--THEY GET TO USE THAT TO FUCK WITH US?!

YOU SHOULD CONTROL THIS MAN.
WHAT...?

...UN-FUCKIN'-CLENCH.
INDEED.

TWO THINGS I FORGOT, MATE.

WHEN IT COMES TO VOUGHT... OR ANY CORPORATE OUTFIT, REALLY...ALL THAT COUNTS TO THEM IS PROFIT.
THEY SEND THEIR KIDS ON PLANES BUILT BY THE LOWEST BIDDER. THEY TRAVEL ON THE FUCKIN' THINGS THEMSELVES. COMPANY JETS OR FIRST CLASS, THEY STILL GO ON 'EM.
SAFETY COSTS. MONEY'S GOD.

"SO IF YOU DO GET SENT PROOF THAT YOUR NUMBER ONE EARNER'S MAD AS ARSEHOLES...YOU DON'T DO NOTHIN' 'TIL YOU'VE GOT NO CHOICE AT ALL.
"YOU HANG ON. YOU KEEP HIM EARNIN'. WHAT'S SUICIDE TO ANYONE ELSE IS GOOD BUSINESS SENSE TO LADS LIKE THEM."

"THE SECOND THING I FORGOT WAS WHAT MALLORY SAID ABOUT THE WILD CARD."
...THE HELL WITH IT.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAHH!!!
FUCKING ASSHOLE! STUPID PRICK!
AAAAAAHH...!
WHERE THE FUCK IS HE?!
OH, JESUS--!

next: ARMISTICE

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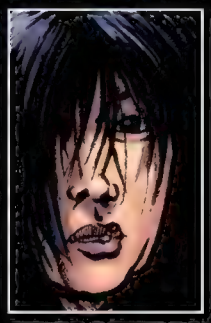

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

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PROPER PREPARATION AND PLANNING

part three

THEY DIDN'T EVEN GET TO LIVE! THAT ANIMAL JUST SLAUGHTERED THEM! AND ALL YOU CAN SAY IS NOW I KNOW HOW HIGH THE STAKES ARE?!

Q'UEST-CE QUE C'EST...?
FUCKIN' LAMPLIGHTER FOLLOWED US YESTERDAY.

FOLLOWED MALLORY. DAUGHTER'S IN TOWN WITH THE TWINS.
NON...!
STAYIN' AT THE PIERRE. COLONEL TOOK HIS DAUGHTER TO DINNER, LEFT THE KIDS IN THE ROOM.
SON OF A BITCH JUST BURNED 'EM ALIVE, MALLORY SAW HIM FLYIN' AWAY...

WOULD THE THREE OF YOU PLEASE GIVE US A MINUTE--?
LET 'EM STAY.
THEY DESERVE TO KNOW WHAT'S ON THEIR BOSS'S MIND.
THOMPSON & GARAND
INDUSTRIAL IMPORTS

DESERVE TO KNOW IF HE'S STILL FIT FOR COMMAND.
WHAT?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT COMMAND? YOU WERE A BUCK PRIVATE! YOU NEVER HELD RANK OF ANY KIND!
OH, BUT IF IT COMES TO IT--

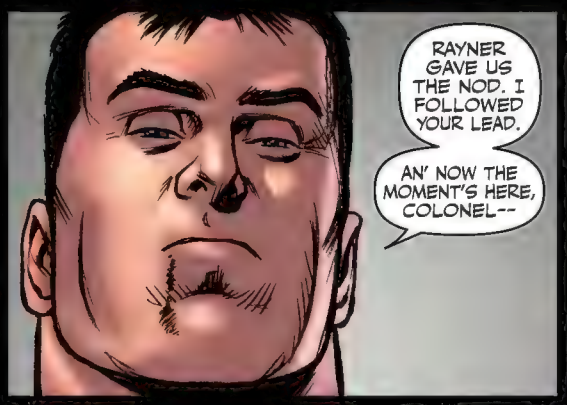
I'M A FUCKIN' GENERAL, MATE.

A GENERAL--!
I LET YOU TALK ME INTO MAKING CONTACT WITH THAT VERMIN, INTO ADMITTING WE SENT THOSE ATROCIOUS PICTURES! AND--
AN' YOU LET YERSELF GET FOLLOWED. AN' YEAH, NOW YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LOSE SOMEONE.
THOMPSON & GARAND

DON'T.
I LET YOU AWAY WITH THE FIRST ONE 'COS YOU'RE UPSET. I DO THE SAME TO YOU AN' I'LL TAKE YER FUCKIN' HEAD OFF.

YOU LOST SOMEONE YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT. DON'T GIVE ME ANY O' THAT OL' BOLLOCKS ABOUT YER BATTALION, I'VE SEEN ENOUGH OFFICERS CRYIN' CROCODILE TEARS ABOUT THE LADS THEY USED AS CANNON FODDER.

NOW, YOU SAID I TALKED YOU INTO IT, BUT HOW HARD DID YOU REALLY MAKE ME WORK?
YOU WAS ALWAYS SO SURE THE LAMPLIGHTER WAS THE WEAK LINK--YOU SAID HE WAS A PUSSY COMPARED TO THE REST OF 'EM. THE WAY YOU USED TO CARRY ON, YOU COULDN'T WAIT TO GET STUCK INTO THE SEVEN.
THOMPSO
&
ARAND
DUSTRIAL
MPORTS

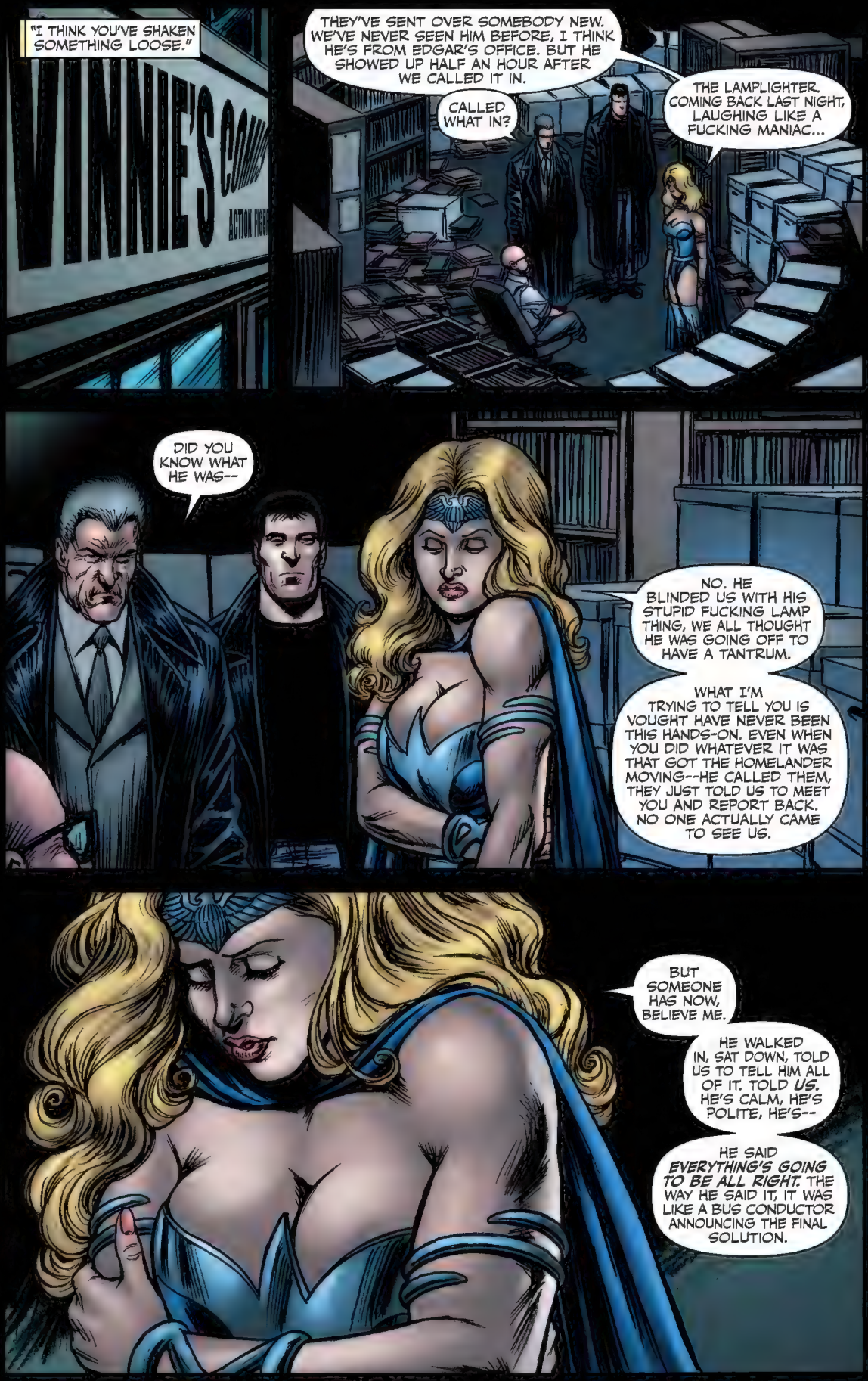

RAYNER GAVE US THE NOD. I FOLLOWED YOUR LEAD.
AN' NOW THE MOMENT'S HERE, COLONEL--

SO ARE YOU STILL AS KEEN AS YOU USED TO BE?

THE... LAST TIME I LET A MAN *TALK TO ME* LIKE THAT...
HHRRM.

THE LEGEND.
MAEVE.

BUTCHER, YOU'RE WITH ME.
THE REST OF YOU STAND BY.


"I THINK YOU'VE SHAKEN SOMETHING LOOSE."
VINNIE'S
THEY'VE SENT OVER SOMEBODY NEW. WE'VE NEVER SEEN HIM BEFORE, I THINK HE'S FROM EDGAR'S OFFICE. BUT HE SHOWED UP HALF AN HOUR AFTER WE CALLED IT IN.
CALLED WHAT IN?
THE LAMPLIGHTER. COMING BACK LAST NIGHT, LAUGHING LIKE A FUCKING MANIAC...
DID YOU KNOW WHAT HE WAS--
NO. HE BLINDED US WITH HIS STUPID FUCKING LAMP THING, WE ALL THOUGHT HE WAS GOING OFF TO HAVE A TANTRUM.
WHAT I'M TRYING TO TELL YOU IS VOUGHT HAVE NEVER BEEN THIS HANDS-ON. EVEN WHEN YOU DID WHATEVER IT WAS THAT GOT THE HOMELANDER MOVING--HE CALLED THEM, THEY JUST TOLD US TO MEET YOU AND REPORT BACK. NO ONE ACTUALLY CAME TO SEE US.
BUT SOMEONE HAS NOW, BELIEVE ME.
HE WALKED IN, SAT DOWN, TOLD US TO TELL HIM ALL OF IT. TOLD *US*. HE'S CALM, HE'S POLITE, HE'S--
HE SAID *EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.* THE WAY HE SAID IT, IT WAS LIKE A BUS CONDUCTOR ANNOUNCING THE FINAL SOLUTION.

THE WORDS ARE MUNDANE.
BUT...THE MEANING.

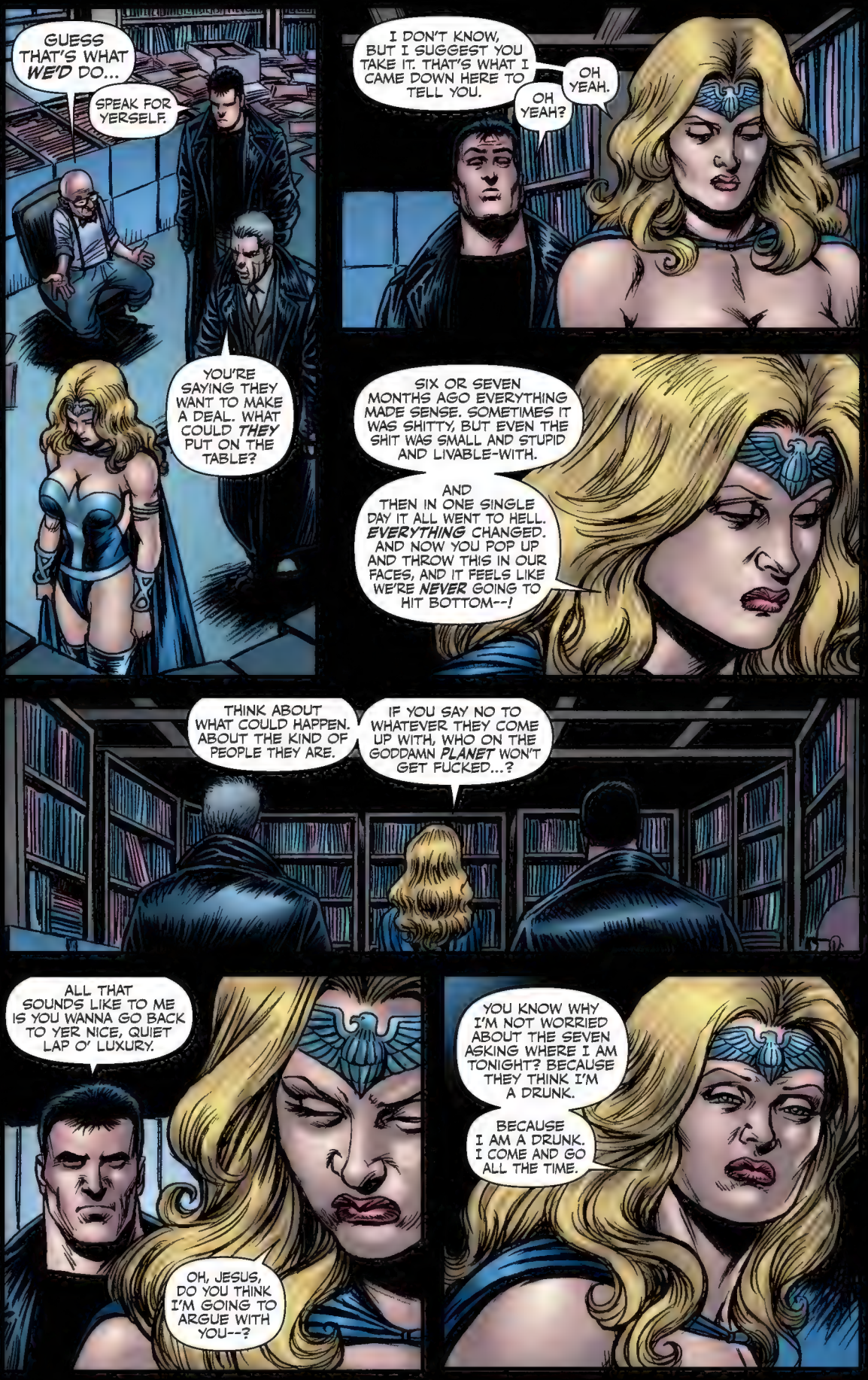
YOU KNOW WHAT THE LAMPLIGHTER DID?
WE GOT IT OUT OF HIM.
YOU KNOW WHAT WE DID?

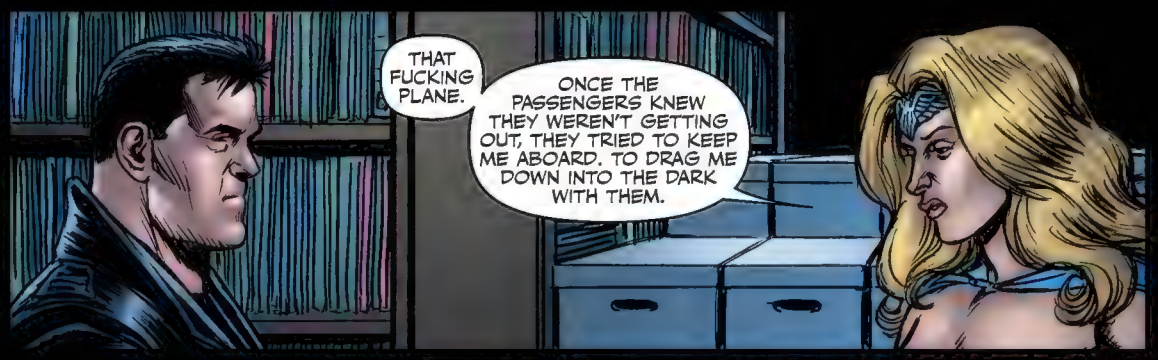
TO PUT THE WIND UP THE HOMELANDER IN THE FIRST PLACE?
AT THE TIME I THOUGHT IT HAD TO DO WITH NINE-ELEVEN, BUT YOU'VE OBVIOUSLY GOT SOMETHING ELSE. FEEL FREE TO KEEP IT TO YOURSELVES.
VOUGHT SAID WE HAD TO GO WITH HIM--ONE MENTION OF THAT FUCKING DAY AND WE SHUT UP AND GOT MOVING. WHEN I SAW THE TWO OF YOU STANDING THERE I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO PUKE.

THEY AIN'T INTERESTED IN *YOU,* KID...
REALLY.
SO HOW EXACTLY WILL EVERYTHING *BE ALL RIGHT?*

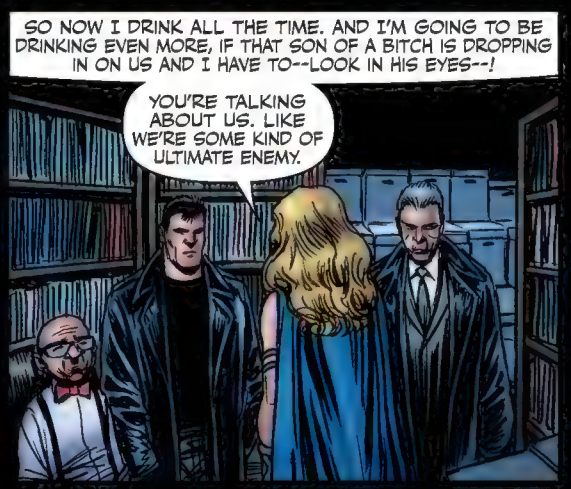
LOOK... NO ONE KNEW WHAT THE LAMPLIGHTER HAD IN MIND. AND I THINK THEY WANT TO, TO MAKE THAT UP TO YOU...
COME AGAIN?

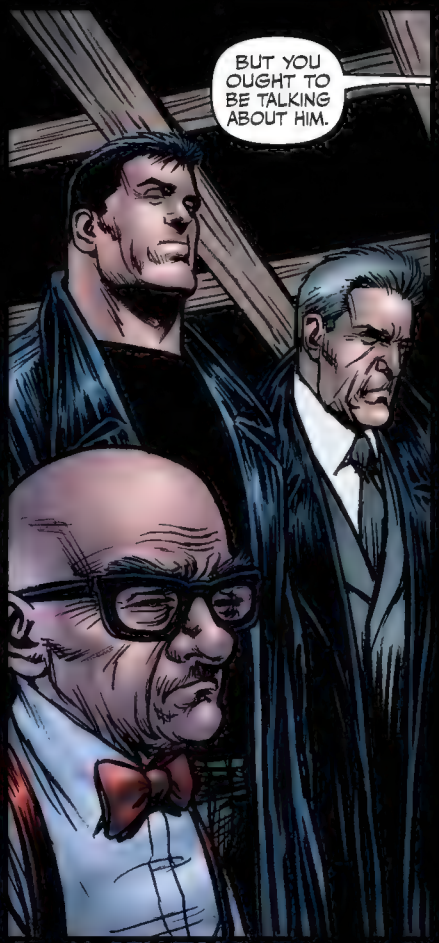
WHATEVER IT IS YOU HAVE, THEY SEEM TO WANT TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION.
THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT ESTABLISHING A STATUS QUO. LIVING WITH IT.
THEN WORKING ON IT.

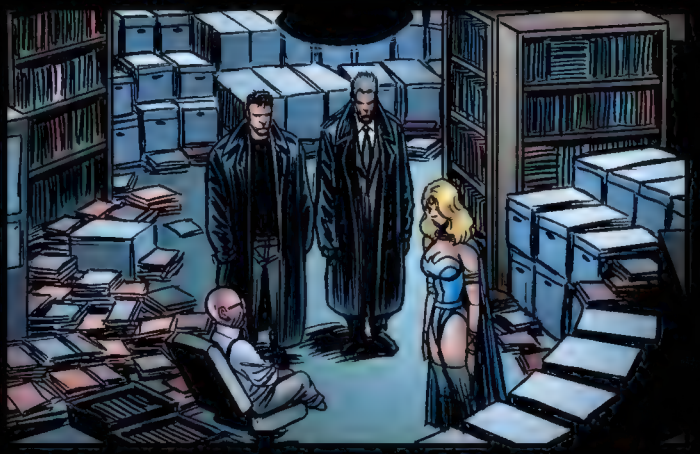

GUESS THAT'S WHAT WE'D DO...
SPEAK FOR YERSELF.
YOU'RE SAYING THEY WANT TO MAKE A DEAL. WHAT COULD THEY PUT ON THE TABLE?
I DON'T KNOW, BUT I SUGGEST YOU TAKE IT. THAT'S WHAT I CAME DOWN HERE TO TELL YOU.
OH YEAH?
OH YEAH.
SIX OR SEVEN MONTHS AGO EVERYTHING MADE SENSE. SOMETIMES IT WAS SHITTY, BUT EVEN THE SHIT WAS SMALL AND STUPID AND LIVABLE-WITH.
AND THEN IN ONE SINGLE DAY IT ALL WENT TO HELL. EVERYTHING CHANGED. AND NOW YOU POP UP AND THROW THIS IN OUR FACES, AND IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE NEVER GOING TO HIT BOTTOM--!
THINK ABOUT WHAT COULD HAPPEN. ABOUT THE KIND OF PEOPLE THEY ARE.
IF YOU SAY NO TO WHATEVER THEY COME UP WITH, WHO ON THE GODDAMN PLANET WON'T GET FUCKED...?
ALL THAT SOUNDS LIKE TO ME IS YOU WANNA GO BACK TO YER NICE, QUIET LAP O' LUXURY.
OH, JESUS, DO YOU THINK I'M GOING TO ARGUE WITH YOU--?
YOU KNOW WHY I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT THE SEVEN ASKING WHERE I AM TONIGHT? BECAUSE THEY THINK I'M A DRUNK.
BECAUSE I AM A DRUNK. I COME AND GO ALL THE TIME.


THAT FUCKING PLANE.
ONCE THE PASSENGERS KNEW THEY WEREN'T GETTING OUT, THEY TRIED TO KEEP ME ABOARD. TO DRAG ME DOWN INTO THE DARK WITH THEM.

HANDS, JUST DOZENS OF HANDS, HANGING ONTO ME. I HAD TO FLY *THROUGH* THE CROWD AT THE DOOR.
AND WHEN I WAS OUT... THEY WERE ALL OVER ME LIKE PASTE.

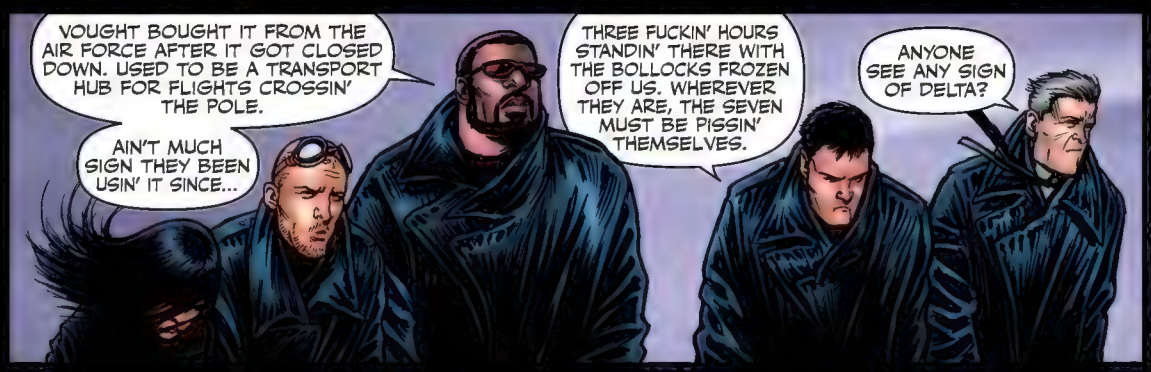

SO NOW I DRINK ALL THE TIME. AND I'M GOING TO BE DRINKING EVEN MORE, IF THAT SON OF A BITCH IS DROPPING IN ON US AND I HAVE TO--LOOK IN HIS EYES--!
YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT US. LIKE WE'RE SOME KIND OF ULTIMATE ENEMY.


BUT YOU OUGHT TO BE TALKING ABOUT HIM.

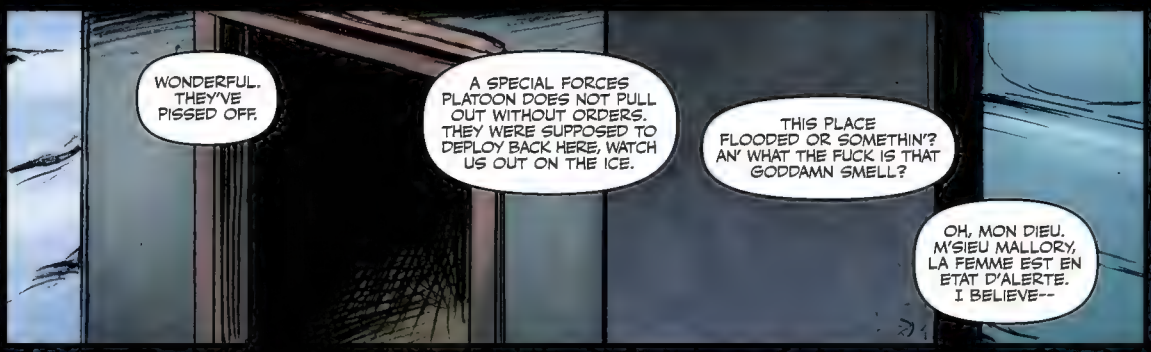


...I HATE THIS SHIT.
I WANT TO JUST LIVE INSIDE MYSELF.

C'EST JUST LIKE "LE THING". I DID NOT NOTICE WHEN WE ARRIVED.

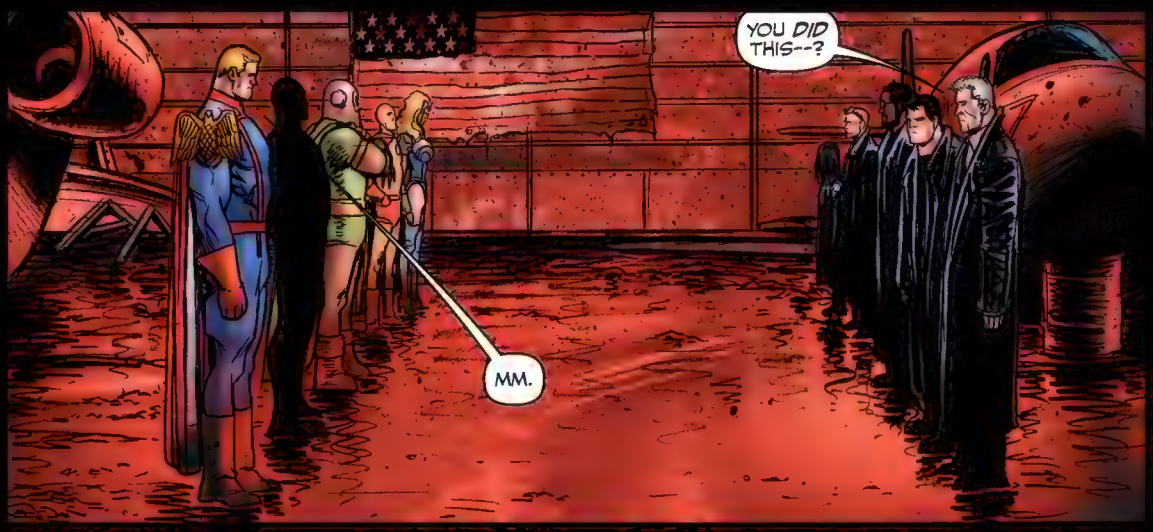

VOUGHT BOUGHT IT FROM THE AIR FORCE AFTER IT GOT CLOSED DOWN. USED TO BE A TRANSPORT HUB FOR FLIGHTS CROSSIN' THE POLE.
AIN'T MUCH SIGN THEY BEEN USIN' IT SINCE...
THREE FUCKIN' HOURS STANDIN' THERE WITH THE BOLLOCKS FROZEN OFF US. WHEREVER THEY ARE, THE SEVEN MUST BE PISSIN' THEMSELVES.
ANYONE SEE ANY SIGN OF DELTA?

PROBABLY HAVIN' A BREW-UP. THEY MAY AS WELL BE, FOR ALL THE USE THEY ARE.
RAYNER SUGGESTED THEM AND I AGREED. IF A COUPLE OF RED RIVER SQUADS HAD SHOWN UP, YOU'D HAVE FOUND OUT WHAT USE THEY CAN BE IN NO TIME.
ALL RIGHT, SO WHERE THE FUCK ARE THEY? HELLO?


WONDERFUL. THEY'VE PISSED OFF.
A SPECIAL FORCES PLATOON DOES NOT PULL OUT WITHOUT ORDERS. THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO DEPLOY BACK HERE, WATCH US OUT ON THE ICE.
THIS PLACE FLOODED OR SOMETHIN'? AN' WHAT THE FUCK IS THAT GODDAMN SMELL?
OH, MON DIEU. M'SIEU MALLORY, LA FEMME EST EN ETAT D'ALERTE. I BELIEVE--

THAT WE ARE STANDING IN THEM.
ALL RIGHT, SOMEONE FIND THE FUCKIN' LIGHT SW--

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, WE'VE GOT IT.
WHAT DO YOU SAY WE GET DOWN TO BUSINESS?

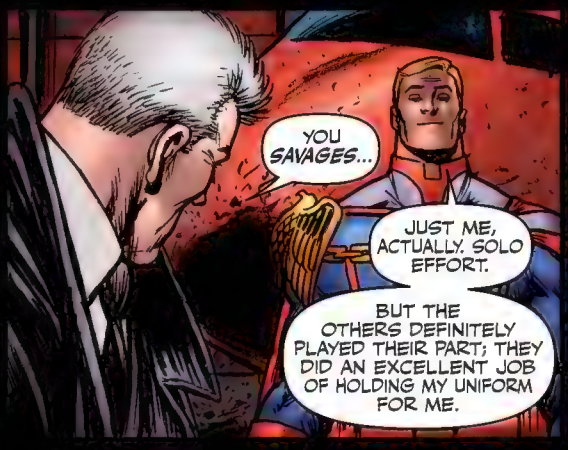

YOU DID THIS--?
MM.

YOU COULD BARELY COPE WITH HALF A DOZEN RAGHEADS ON THAT PLANE, AN' YOU'RE TRYNNA SAY YOU DID THIS MOB WITHOUT 'EM FIRIN' A SHOT?

WELL, WE LEARNED A LESSON FROM THAT LITTLE EPISODE.
NOISE WAS CERTAINLY A CONCERN, YES. WITH YOU BARELY A MILE AWAY OUT THERE.

SO WE HAD RED RIVER USE NERVE GAS FIRST.

AND AFTER THAT IT WAS EASY.
WELL, NOT EASY, EXACTLY, THERE WAS A CERTAIN DEGREE OF PHYSICAL EFFORT. BUT YOU GAVE US PLENTY OF TIME.

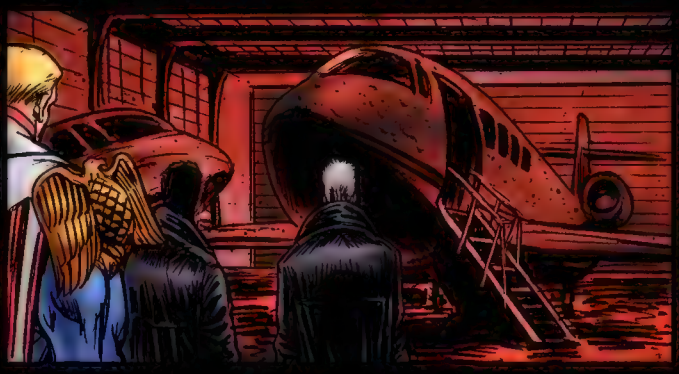

YOU SAVAGES...
JUST ME, ACTUALLY. SOLO EFFORT.
BUT THE OTHERS DEFINITELY PLAYED THEIR PART; THEY DID AN EXCELLENT JOB OF HOLDING MY UNIFORM FOR ME.

YOU'RE TALKIN' LIKE YOU COME UP WITH THIS YERSELF.
NOT IMPORTANT.
WE'RE MAKING A POINT. WE'RE HELPING YOU SEE.

YOU KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT SEPTEMBER. YOU HAVE OTHER MATERIAL. BUT YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT ALL THAT WILL ONLY TAKE YOU SO FAR.
NEVER MIND THE CERTAINTY OF YOUR OWN DEATHS. LOOK AT WHAT YOU'RE STANDING IN, AND THEN EXTRAPOLATE.

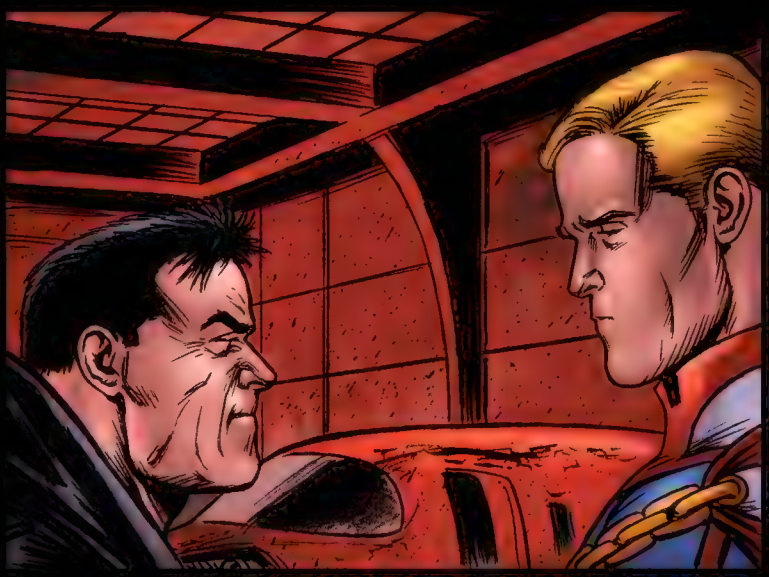
THAT SAID: AN IRREVERSIBLE DEGREE OF TURMOIL PROFITS NO ONE. WHAT WE'RE SUGGESTING IS A MUTUAL RETREAT FROM THE BRINK.
VOUGHT-AMERICAN ARE PREPARED TO SUSPEND THEIR PROGRAM OF SUPERPOWER IN NATIONAL DEFENSE--ON A TEMPORARY BASIS. THEY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE CONCEPT NEEDS SOME FURTHER THOUGHT.

GODDAMN RIGHT IT DOES...
ALSO: COLONEL MALLORY, YOU SUFFERED A PERSONAL TRAGEDY. IN THE AIRCRAFT BEHIND YOU IS AN ITEM OF COMPENSATION.

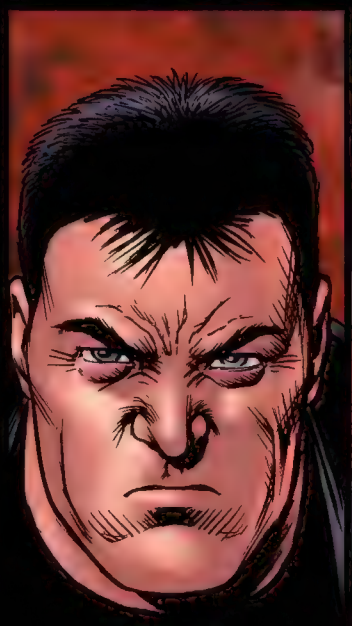


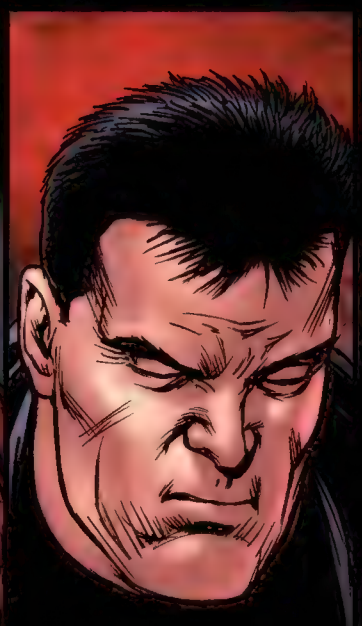
DO YOU KNOW WHAT I HATE?

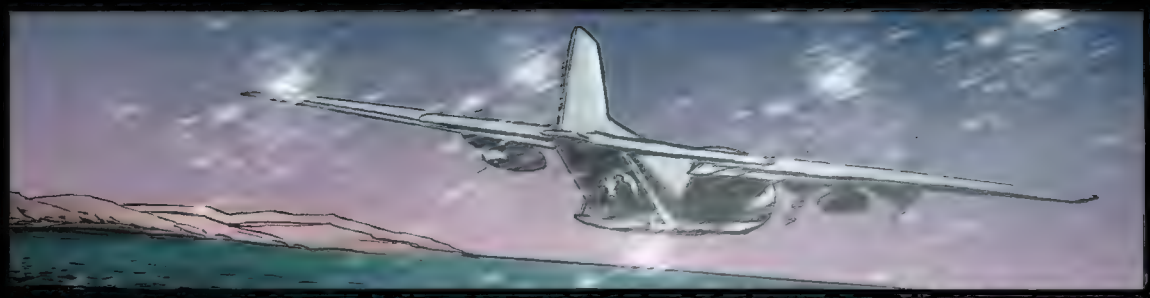
SOMEWHERE IT WON'T WASH UP, IF YOU DON'T MIND.
I THINK I CAN HEAR YOUR RIDE HOME.

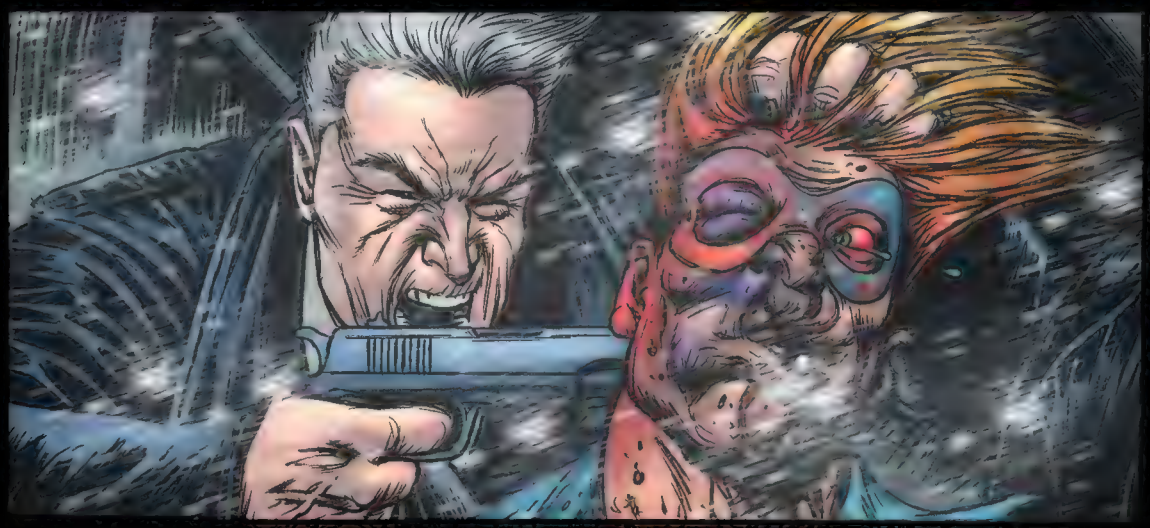


PROBLEM?







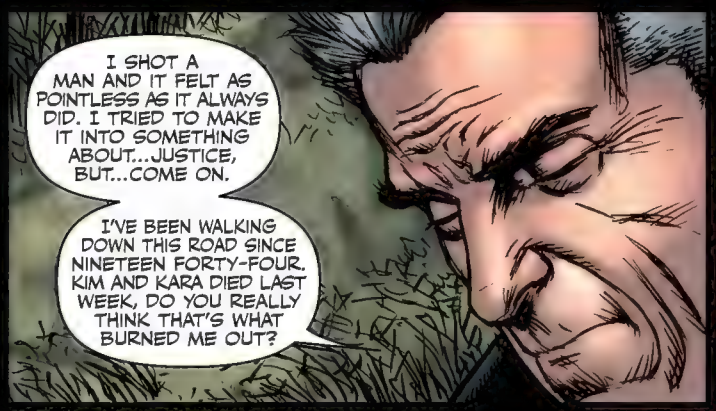


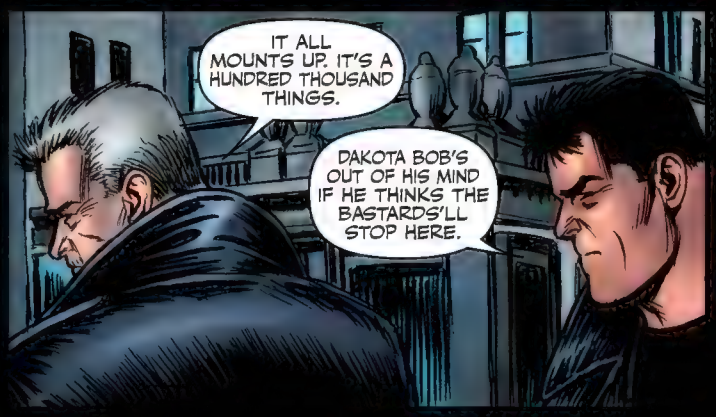
ARE YOU MAKIN' A FUCKIN' SPEECH?

HOW'S YER DAUGHTER DOIN'?
WELL, IF SHE EVER DOES TALK AGAIN, I DON'T THINK IT'LL BE TO ME.
SOMETHIN' ELSE YOU CAN CHALK UP TO THE FUCKERS.
RIGHT, WELL, M.M'S BEEN LOOKIN' AT--
RAYNER CALLED ME THIS MORNING. OUR FUNDING'S BEEN PULLED.
SHE FUCKIN' WHAT?
IT DIDN'T COME FROM HER.
THE PRESIDENT IS CONCERNED THAT THINGS WENT TOO FAR. OR VERY NEARLY DID, AT LEAST.
I THINK THAT PRESSURE'S BEEN BROUGHT TO BEAR. A C.I.A.-BACKED UNIT CHARGED WITH SUPERHUMAN SURVEILLANCE IS A LIABILITY TO HIM, ESPECIALLY WITH A VOUGHT-AMERICAN MAN IN THE V.P.'S OFFICE.
FOR THE MOMENT...HE HAS TO BE SEEN TO PROCEED WITH CAUTION.
HOW HARD DID YOU FIGHT THIS?

...I'M DONE.

YOU'RE DONE.
YES.
SO YOU GOT WHAT YOU WERE AFTER. THEY LET YOU PUT A BULLET IN SOMEONE, AN' THAT'S IT.
FUCK ME AN' THE REST O' THEM: YOU'RE SORTED.


I SHOT A MAN AND IT FELT AS POINTLESS AS IT ALWAYS DID. I TRIED TO MAKE IT INTO SOMETHING ABOUT...JUSTICE, BUT...COME ON.
I'VE BEEN WALKING DOWN THIS ROAD SINCE NINETEEN FORTY-FOUR. KIM AND KARA DIED LAST WEEK, DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT'S WHAT BURNED ME OUT?


IT ALL MOUNTS UP. IT'S A HUNDRED THOUSAND THINGS.
DAKOTA BOB'S OUT OF HIS MIND IF HE THINKS THE BASTARDS'LL STOP HERE.

WELL, MAYBE ONE DAY HE'LL REALIZE HE HAS TO FIGHT. MAYBE THEN YOU'LL GET THE CALL.
BUT I'M...
DONE.
YEAH, YOU SAID THAT.

FIFTEEN FUCKIN' YEARS SINCE YOU TOLD ME I'D HAVE THAT CUNT IN MY SIGHTS, AN' THERE HE WAS NOT TWO FOOT AWAY--!
HE WOULD HAVE KILLED YOU.

THERE'S PART O' ME WOULDN'T'VE GIVEN A FUCK. JUST TO SPEND ONE SECOND WITH ME HANDS AROUND HIS NECK, THAT WOULDA BEEN...
INSTEAD WE END UP MAKIN' POXY FUCKIN' DEALS.

AH, SHIT.

I WAS NEVER GONNA GET A GO AT HIM, WAS I?

WHAT...?
YOU KNEW THEY'D NEVER HAVE THE BOLLOCKS FOR IT. TO REALLY TAKE ON VOUGHT.

WHAT'S A DICKHEAD LIKE ME NEXT TO THE GREATEST SUPE THAT EVER LIVED?
THE MOST EXPENSIVE FUCKIN' ASSET O' THE BIGGEST CORPORATION IN THE WORLD?

YOU KNEW WHAT I'D LOST. BUT YOU STOOD IN THAT CELL AN' YOU STILL...
ALL YOU WANTED WAS A PIT BULL, WASN'T IT?
I...
FUCK OFF.

FUCK OFF OR I WILL BURY YOU NEXT TO THEM TWO LITTLE GIRLS.

BUTCHER?

YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T HAVE CARED IF HE'D KILLED YOU.
WHAT ABOUT US?

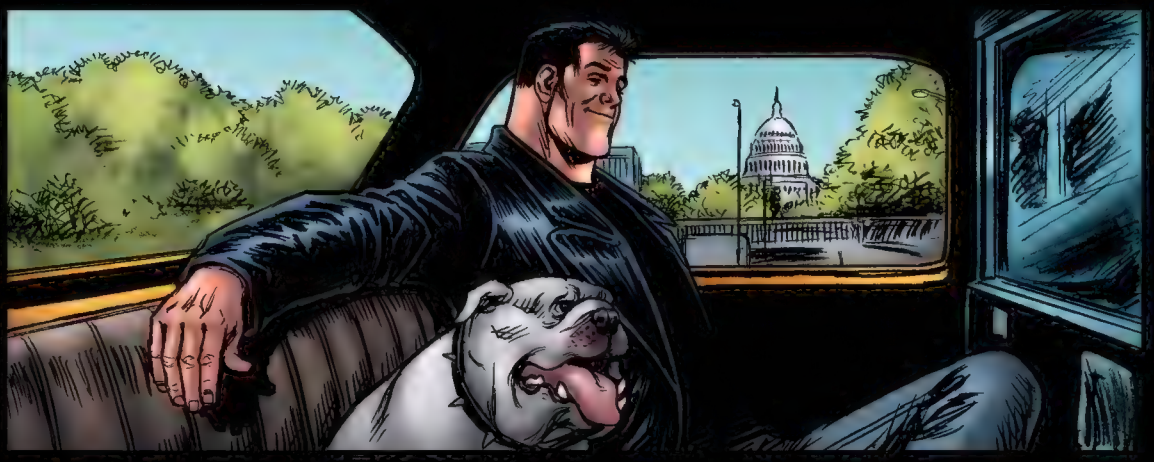
UNION STATION

HE LOST HIS BOTTLE, DIDN'T HE, TERROR?
OL' MALLORY.

HE LOST HIS BOTTLE AN' THE BOYS JUST FELL TO PIECES.

IF YOU WANT SOMETHIN' DONE RIGHT YOU HAVE TO DO IT YERSELF, THAT'S THE FUCKIN' LESSON THERE.
WATERGATE HOTEL, PLEASE, MATE.
NO PETS.
NAH, HE'S A GUIDE DOG. WHAT DO YOU CALL IT, UH, A SEEIN' EYE DOG?
TAXI

YOU AIN'T BLIND...
WELL, THEY GAVE HIM THE NIGHT OFF, DIDN'T THEY? HERE.



next: MONKEY MAGIC

Pin-up art by
P.J. HOLDEN

HANGING OUT WITH GARTH ENNIS AND THE BOYS

By Troy Brownfield • Originally posted on NEWSARAMA.COM on May 5, 2010

Issue #42 of "The Boys" hits stores today, and the penultimate issue of "The Innocents" arc seems to be moving the title closer to its endgame. Though, as Ennis tells us, the ultimate conclusion is still over two years away, events in the book have been accelerating with Butcher's suspicions of Hughie, the lingering question of Starlight, and much more. We caught up with writer Garth Ennis to check up on "The Boys" and to see where things stand.

Newsarama: What's your view of how the series has gone thus far? How much of it has gone exactly to plan, and how many of the storylines have branched off in ways that you may not have intended, but nevertheless followed?

Garth Ennis: Things always go off in their own direction, that's part of what makes writing enjoyable. What I like to do is have a rough outline in mind I can use as a base for each story. Example- the St. Patrick's day episode in We Gotta Go Now. I'd been wanting to share my thoughts on St. Pat's for some time, but it was only when I started the story that I realized a bunch of subhuman frat boys provided the perfect means to express them.

Nrama: We're doing this interview as the SuperDuper/Malchemical storyline is just about to wrap. After many teams filled with, as you might say, right bastards, here's a team that's not so bad. Why include the seemingly more optimistic SuperDuper?

Ennis: I'd been thinking about the notion of real superheroes, or perhaps more accurately standard superheroes- the kind you find in 99% of superhero comic books. Develop powers, put on outfit, set out to battle evil. I was wondering where people like that would end up in the real world, and of course the answer is that they'd all be shot to death by criminals or police, or locked up in lunatic asylums. But what if they weren't? What would a corporation like Vought-American do with such innocents, how would they make money off them?

Nrama: At this point, Butcher has become very suspicious of Hughie. Is it totally outside of Butcher's character to give anyone the benefit of the doubt?

Ennis: There's no doubt that Butcher's fond of Hughie, or at least who he initially believed Hughie to be before he got suspicious, and he wants to be absolutely sure before he acts. Almost anyone else would probably get their neck wrung on the spot.

Nrama: You've never been shy about frank depictions of violence, language or sexuality in your books. Occasionally, it's drawn some critical fire. Why is important to you as a creator to present your story in precisely this way?

Ennis: Honesty. If you kick someone in the face, their jaw's going to break and send blood and teeth flying everywhere. If you're baling out of a burning tank, you're going to say more than "good gracious." And if you perform cunilingus at the wrong time of the month, you're going to get a facefull of what Hughie got. Although to be honest, that one was more for laughs.

Nrama: It's ironic that the genre you've chosen to parody (that is, super-heroes) has grown increasingly violent during the actual run of "The Boys" itself. Do you find it difficult to write "The Boys" in the way that you do when, for example, members of the Teen Titans are being eaten by giant dogs and Avengers are getting ripped in half during crossover?

Ennis: Not at all, I don't read any of it.

Nrama: Another interesting turn is the fact that a reader will need more than a little super-hero knowledge to get all of the references that you've incorporated into the book. Is that itself a meta-comment on the frequently insular nature of mainstream super-hero comics, or is that just a side effect of taking swipes at a pretty expansive library of characters and concepts?

Ennis: The latter. Example- in terms of a mainstream readership, the Legion of Superheroes are pretty obscure characters, but you can't work in this industry for twenty years (all of which I've spent on the DC comps list) and not become vaguely aware of them. I don't think I've ever read an issue cover to cover, but I've at least seen illos of Bouncing Boy and so on. And it's hard to look at characters like that and not include them in The Boys eventually.

Nrama: From this point out, approximately how much of the series is left, and will there be any other branching mini-series like "Herogasm" before that conclusion?

Ennis: The book runs until #70. This summer we've got "Highland Laddie", a six-part miniseries featuring Hughie's origin- "Herogasm" artist John McCrea is drawing that now. Same time next year we'll have a similar mini starring Butcher, which I'm two episodes into and enjoying enormously.

Nrama: Do you envision "The Boys" as your final word on the super-hero style book?

Ennis: Jesus, I hope so.

Nrama: As "The Boys" wraps, are you eyeing an further long-terms projects? If so, will they include more "Battlefields"?

Ennis: Definitely more war stories, hopefully including at least one more Battlefields series. A third series of Wormwood at some point, featuring the second coming- sort of. Beyond that, plenty of ideas but nothing definite at this point. "The Boys" has two and a half years to go, I've plenty of time yet.

Nrama: We can't let this finish without at least a few words about [artist Darick] Robertson. On a scale of 1-10, how essential has his contribution been? What does he bring to "The Boys" that other artists might not?

Ennis: Vital. He brought his own unique vision to the Boys and their world, provided the perfect template for other artists to work from. Butcher and Hughie in particular, I think, could only have been visualized by Darick.

Early sketch of The Boys
by Darick Robertson

Pin-up art by
ROB STEEN

GARTH ENNIS TALKS THE BOYS AND MORE

By Heidi MacDonald • Originally posted on COMICSBEAT.COM on February 9, 2007

Two weeks ago the news broke that DC/Wildstorm was canceling The Boys, the dark and scabrous superhero book by Garth Ennis and Darick Robertson, due to content concerns. DC graciously agreed to let Ennis and Robertson take the book to a new publisher – even though the book is creator owned, DC could have held it up for a while, but chose not do. They also gave Robertson leave to work on the book outside of his DC exclusive contract.

While the Internets went wild speculating on the exact reason for the cancellation, publishers were swamping the creators with offers. It was a Cinderella story, with The Boys, a covert ops team of blaspheming hooligans brought together to rein in superheroes who get too big for their britches, the ones trying on the glass combat boot.

This week it was announced that Nick Barucci's Dynamite Entertainment would be the new home of The Boys. A trade collecting issues 1-6 and the already completed issue #7 are waiting in the wings to spring more mayhem on an adoring public.

Ennis agreed to a brief interview explaining as much of the behind the scenes of the last few weeks as he could. So let's just get to it.

THE BEAT: In terms of moving to Dynamite what can you tell us about the time frame?

ENNIS: We are hoping it will be a matter of a couple of months. I can't tell you much more than that at the moment. The problem is, of course, we're at the very early days here. But we're hoping it will be a matter of a couple of months. It's a shame I can't tell you more!

THE BEAT: Issue 7 was already completed, right?

ENNIS: Yes, #7 was in the can and parts of 8 through 11.

THE BEAT: So it's in pretty good shape. Darick is still exclusive so I imagine he'll be doing some stuff for DC. Can you talk about his schedule at all?

ENNIS: He can tell you more about that but as far as I know he intends to be doing a fair bit of stuff for DC.

THE BEAT: So…why did you choose Dynamite?

ENNIS: Well, a number of things. They're not too big, so we're not going to get lost, and they're not too small, so the company's not going to go under before we finish publishing the thing. Nicky Barucci played a big part. Darick and I know him to begin with. He's someone that I like and trust and am looking forward to working with for those reasons. We both see Nicky as a guy who's going to work his ass off to make this book a success. We know he's going to go all out to promote it and do all he can to make sure it succeeds. As I mentioned earlier, at a big company you might get lost. People have a tendency to maybe put out the book and say, "Here's your book, sink or swim, best of luck." We think we're going to get a little more personal attention at Dynamite and that's going to make all the difference.

THE BEAT: Speaking of big companies, let me go back a bit and talk a bit about the previous history of The Boys. What was your original plan to "out-Preacher Preacher?" What did that mean?

ENNIS: What that meant—the most direct translation was "Look at this. Look at this. Buy it." Beyond that, it was really just something to stick on a poster like "In space no one can hear you scream." Something like that. I think it communicates a vague sense that this is going to be an extreme book and there's going to be a lot of naughty things in it. Beyond that it was really just something for promotional purposes.

THE BEAT: And it was put on a poster, correct?

ENNIS: Yes, exactly. What we're going to put on the next poster, I don't know. Actually, I do have a bit of an inkling, but you'll have to wait and see.

THE BEAT: Okay, we'll be waiting. What can you tell us about the specific problems that caused The Boys to leave DC?

ENNIS: I think if I were to sum it up in one line, it would be that you can have comics where people do awful things to each other, like Preacher, but you can't have a comic where super people do awful things to each other, like The Boys, and I think that rather than any specific instances—panels or pages or lines in the story—that was really the problem in a nutshell. When you have comics that—even superficially—look a bit too much like the company's regular output, and the characters in them are doing the most ghastly things and behaving in the most awful way, and blaspheming and swearing and so on, that creates a real problem. That just will not fly. And that, more than anything else, was what brought an end to The Boys time at DC.

THE BEAT: So it wasn't like, what people have been speculating, a big wig at DC specifically opening up the book and seeing a hamster crawling out of a dead man's ass and saying, we can't publish this.

ENNIS: That's in issue 6. I think once they had a chance to read the whole thing, the damage was done long before issue 6. If I could just guess at a couple of things, there's an orgy sequence in issue 4, there's a sequence in issue 3 where a girl has to effectively blow her way onto a superteam. Things like that did the real damage long before any hamsters appeared.

THE BEAT: Why do you take so much joy in destroying the wholesome image of the superhero?

ENNIS: Well, I don't know about destroying, Destroying sounds kind of final and I think we know that superhero comics will be around a long time after The Boys has finished.

Why do I find it so interesting? Just as with Preacher I was sort of having a go at something I don't like, Christianity, organized religion, in that instance, faith and its abuses, so with The Boys I was doing the same thing in the shape of superhero comics. The whole thing started as I recall about 5 or 6 years ago when me old chum Steve Dillon gave me a couple of James Ellroy books for my birthday, American Tabloid and The Cold Six Thousand, which are both excellent and I thoroughly recommend them. I've read Ellroy before but with these two what he was doing was winding politics and history and crime together to form a picture of American life in the 50s and 60s that I don't think had been done in that way before. He was really forcing us to acknowledge, as he himself put it in the introduction, the debt that we owe to bad men. The way that bad men have helped to form our political life over the past 50 years. He was talking about everyone from the FBI to the CIA to the Mafia to corrupt policemen, to bent politicians…

THE BEAT: A wonderful spectrum!

ENNIS: Indeed. So I read these books and I loved them and I just began to think what would it be like if I did that with superheroes. What would it be if I took 50 years of superhero history and put the same spin on it? You look at what really happened. What goes on behind the mask, what goes on behind the public version of events, the official history that we're fed. The Boys is more or less what I came up with.

Why superheroes, as with many other things that I don't like or don't care about, I find at the same time there's something weirdly fascinating about them. Not done the way they're normally done but as a place to begin, as a thing to twist and do in a different way. I think you've got all kinds of opportunities and possibilities then.

THE BEAT: Well in listening to you speak, it does become a lot more clear, why perhaps publishing this book at a publisher best known for superheroes probably wasn't going to work out.

ENNIS: Yes, there was a sense all along of well, hardly believing we were able to do this thing, and yet as issues went by and there was no response or no reaction, I thought, "Oh well, maybe we're going to be okay. Maybe we're doing all right. Maybe the fact that we're at Wildstorm which is its own odd little corner of the company to begin with, is going to work for us." Famous last words, as it turned out.

I would like to say thanks again to the guys at

Pin-up art by
NICK ABADZIS

Wildstorm, Ben and Scott and Jim. If anyone's the loser in all of this, it's going to be [Wildstorm]. I think this is probably going to curtail their ability to do Mature Readers books and it's shame when that happens to anyone, I think. At the end of the day Darick and I are going to be able to take our book and go somewhere else and do it with a lot more creative freedom, make more money and probably get a bit more attention because of all this. DC, they're fine. They're going to divest themselves of something they don't want. The readers will get their book back. The retailers will get their book back, hopefully after not too long a delay. So yeah it's the Wildstorm guys I feel the most sorry for.

THE BEAT: To an observer, it seems that DC has acted in a very fair manner, all things considered. But it wasn't like there was a struggle leading up to it every issue.

ENNIS: No. Jim Lee was very very helpful along the way when one or two things came up, but not really. [But the situation is really for the best.] We could have been absolutely sunk. They could have insisted on continuing to publish some neutered form of the book, which would have been absolutely impossible. Instead they're just doing the sensible thing and saying, "Look, we can't do anything with this, we don't want it. You take it back and have fun."

THE BEAT: It's certainly commendable. So after this news broke, I understand you suddenly became the belle of the ball. You were very popular.

ENNIS: (chuckles.) I think all told we had about a dozen offers from different publishers. Not all of them quite lasted the course. Once they found out what it would entail, they gracefully backed out. And that's cool. But yes for the last couple of weeks, Darick and I have been considering offers from all these people. And for the most part they've been very nice about it. Even when I delivered the bad news to most of them the other day, the most common response I got was "Oh well, maybe we can do something again, best of luck. "

THE BEAT: I imagine you heard from a lot of people you had never considered working for before and perhaps you didn't this time, but was there anything that surprised you about what you were hearing or observations you drew?

ENNIS: Not so much from talking to the publishers. I found the response to the announcement that The Boys was being cancelled quite interesting. Going online and looking at message boards, which is something I never do. It was interesting. It wouldn't necessarily encourage me to do it again, because we're talking about thoroughly exceptional circumstances here. But it helped to see that the book was working, that there was a definite base of support for it. You see sales figures but that's just a number.

But it's encouraging to see that a lot of people are understanding the book for what it is, and want more of the same. So that you're not just singing in the wilderness, as it were.

THE BEAT: You're definitely in something of a unique position in that you're one of the few comic creators with a track record that is strong enough to be a brand name. Did you ever consider doing something with The Boys where you would have more of the back end deal? An Image-type deal where you would have more risk up front but the payoff would be bigger down the line? You are one of the few people for whom that would be a very small risk.

ENNIS: Well, I do have Darick to think about there. What's easy for me to do is not necessarily easy for him.

THE BEAT: There are still so many constraints between being paid a page rate and having any great creative freedom.

ENNIS: Generally the smaller the publisher the more the creative freedom you get. At Avatar, William [Christensen] pays me the same as DC does, but there is absolutely no restraint whatsoever. Avatar is where I run up against my own limits, probably before I run up against William's actually! And I think the same will be true of Nicky, too.

THE BEAT: I can't imagine Nick will try to rein you in too much!

ENNIS: Apart from anything else, Nick knows what he's getting—he's read the first six issues.

THE BEAT: Right, it's not a pig in a poke for anyone. So this is supposed to be a 60 issue story overall...what's going to happen to Wee Hughie and everyone?

ENNIS: Well, let's see. The next four issue storyline is called "Get Some." And it's the pervy one. They find themselves investigating a superhero in New York, someone who has developed a rather embarrassing problem. And it's kind of a smaller scale story than the first one, just to show Hughie building a relationship with the rest of them, Butcher introducing him and teaching him a lot more about how they work. [We also meet] some allies of the Boys who are kind of important in the way they carry out their missions.

THE BEAT: So there's more to this world to see.

ENNIS: Very much so. It's not simply superheroes do awful things every month. Gradually the more you get into it, the more you'll see that the people behind the superhero and the people behind the Boys are part of a wider political drama being played out. Butcher drops a couple of hints about it when he's talking to Hughie towards the end of issue 6 about the state of play politically in America, the superhero version of America. You'll see a lot more of that.

The third storyline, which begins in issue 11, moves the story to Russia, temporarily, where you'll see a lot of the international political stage and where the Boys figure in that.

THE BEAT: When I asked you earlier about why take on superheroes you made it pretty clear, but there have been other dark takes on superheroes, like The Authority. Was that an influence on you?

ENNIS: Not really. As usual, my influences kind of come from outside comics. Very much in the creation of The Boys themselves and the world they're in. It's a very very dark view of the world, although some might say it's an accurate one, although it's got superheroes slotted into it. You have to think of things like Hollywood Babylon…My own take on superheroes is that if they really existed they'd be between movie stars and politicians. They'd be movie stars because they'd be glamorous and fabulous looking and the people would follow their lives exactly as if they were reading fictional adventures. But they'd be like politicians because they'd have a genuine and tangible effect on our lives and our world.

THE BEAT: Right, so it wouldn't be just like Angelina and Brad jaunting around.

ENNIS: It would be as if Angelina and Brad were the First Couple.

THE BEAT: The other Boys [besides Hughie] seem to be a rather dark and nebulous crew.

ENNIS: You'll learn more about them as you go. You won't learn everything right away. We'll peel back the layers a little bit at a time while involving the characters in ongoing adventures. I have to say that with The Boys it was the first time I consciously sat down deliberately determined to write a 60 chapter graphic novel. I decided from the word go—a little arrogant, but I did it—[that] this is going to last five years. Ironic in the light of what happened, but I thought, this is going to last five years, 60 issues, it's going to be 8 to 10 books, it's going to last, and I have to think about each episode of it, not as a stand alone issue, but as a chapter of a story. With Preacher and Hitman I couldn't really do that because, frankly, I had no idea they were going to last. This is the first time I've really been able to do that. In the case of the other two, I had a rough idea of where things were going. With this I have a definite sense of the book developing as it goes, sort of at its own damn pace really.

THE BEAT: Will there be anyone coming along who's a little bit lovable?

ENNIS: Well, lovable is in the eye of the beholder, but I think you'll find out more about the characters, you'll see why they are the way they are. You might have a bit more sympathy for them as you discover more. I don't know. You may find also that just because they act one way in a fight, in combat, or just because they have an attitude towards superheroes, that seems particularly hostile, doesn't mean they are that way generally.

Also there will be new characters and some people that we've already met, not necessarily in the Boys, who will be fleshed out a little more and will turn out, much to their own surprise, perhaps, to be much different people than who we thought they were. One obvious one, and I don't think I'm giving anything away here, would be Annie January, whose unfortunate initiation to the Seven we saw in issue #3. I think I can promise you a "rich tapestry."

THE BEAT: What else are you working on now?

ENNIS: Right now, finishing up the last issue of WORMWOOD, which I'm having a ball with, one of my favorite things I've been writing recently. Just about to write issue 50 of The Punisher, which is pretty cool. It's going to be a double sized one, with art by Goran Parlov who I think is the discovery of last year.

THE BEAT: He's one of the very best Gorans!

ENNIS: Yes, he's a quality Goran, there's no doubt about it. Issue 50 is going to surprise a lot of people I think. It's going to take us down a road we weren't expecting maybe.

There's a Western from Avatar I'm writing called Streets of Glory. Mike Wolfer is drawing that but it won't be out probably for a year. Another Punisher mini-series for John Romita Jr. Another miniseries called Back to Brooklyn from an idea that Jimmy Palmiotti and I came up with. Not sure yet of the publisher. Apart from that I've got a few upcoming things I can't talk about just yet.

THE BEAT: Here's a question that comes up all the time, so let's get it out of the way. What is the status of City Lights? [This is a graphic novel by Ennis and Steve Dillon that has been in the works at Vertigo for at least five years.]

ENNIS: Don't hold your breath is the status of City Lights. Really, Steve is in no shape to be doing it right now. He's doing his Wolverine book and he's getting a lot of attention and making a lot of money, all of the stuff due to him. But really, I would have to say, don't hold your breath at all.

THE BEAT: But it is something you would still like to do?

ENNIS: Oh, we are going to do it. If there's one thing I know about that story, we both have the confidence in it. When we do get around to it, it will be a story very much worth telling. We just made the mistake of allowing ourselves to be rushed into announcing it. Round about that time there was a lot of stuff happening that we couldn't have foreseen and it really did throw everything a curve.

THE BEAT: And now another obligatory, must-ask question: the Preacher TV show! [Director Mark Steven Johnson is working on a Preacher show for HBO.]

ENNIS: Oh right. Yes.

THE BEAT: What's going on with that?

ENNIS: Well, I know people are going crazy over this, but frankly we've taken barely a step down that road. It's far, far too early to say. I believe that Mark Steven Johnson is working on an adaptation, obviously, a first episode. And I'm going to see him next week and we're going to talk about what he's come up and where we think it should go, and all that kind of stuff.

THE BEAT: So he's keeping you in the loop?

ENNIS: Very much so.

THE BEAT: And you have a good working relationship with him?

ENNIS: So far I have no complaints.

Early sketch of Wee Hughie
by Darick Robertson

Pin-up art by
JOHN HIGGINS

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Garth Ennis Russ Braun Darick Robertson
The BOYS
FIFTY-ONE
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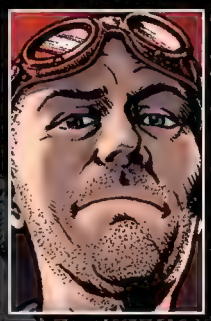
Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

FIFTY-ONE

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.



Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in The Boys.

Written by:
GARTH ENNIS

Colored by:
TONY AVIÑA

Illustrated by:
RUSS BRAUN

Cover by:
DARICK ROBERTSON

Lettered by:
SIMON BOWLAND

The Boys Created By:
ENNIS & ROBERTSON

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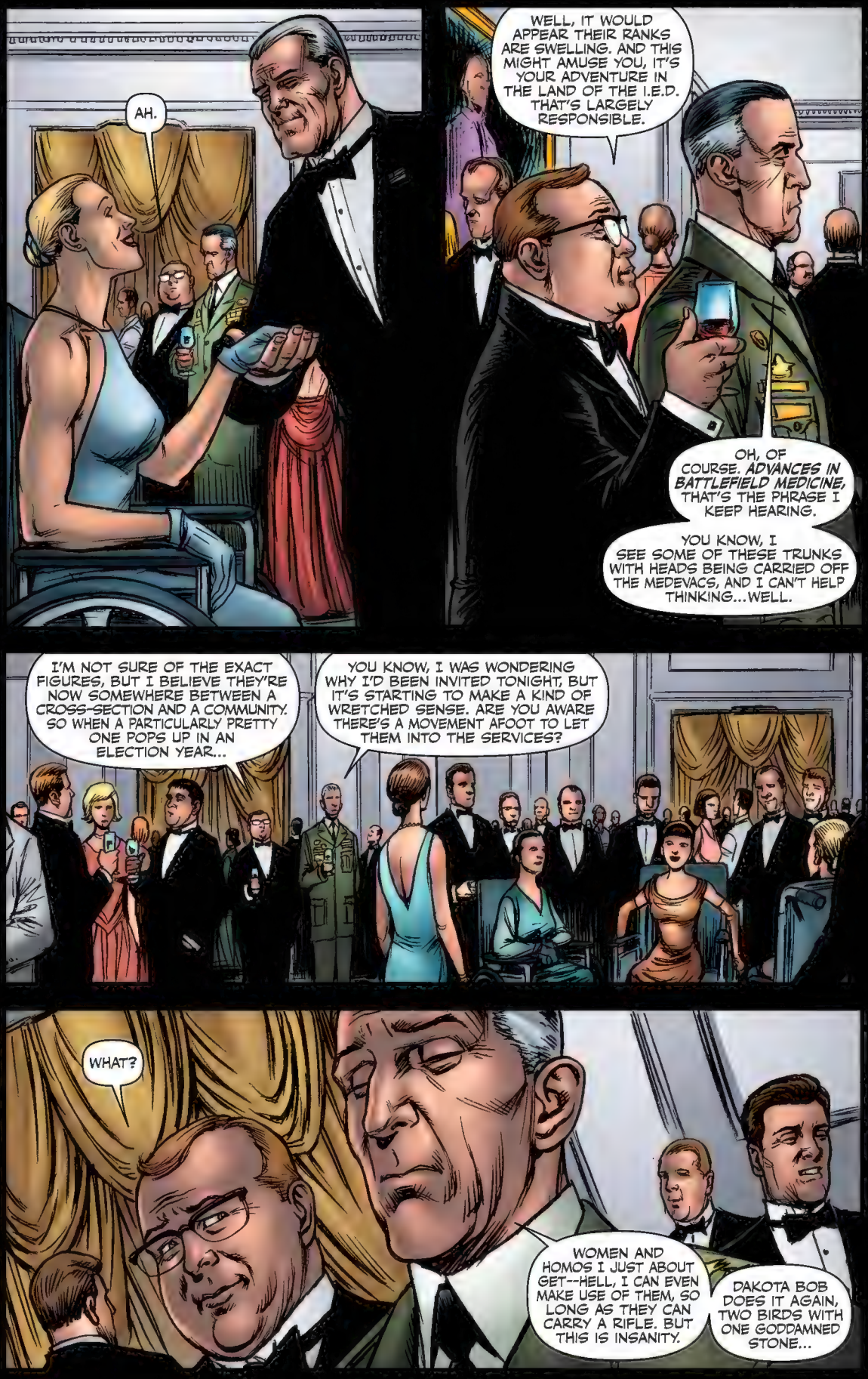
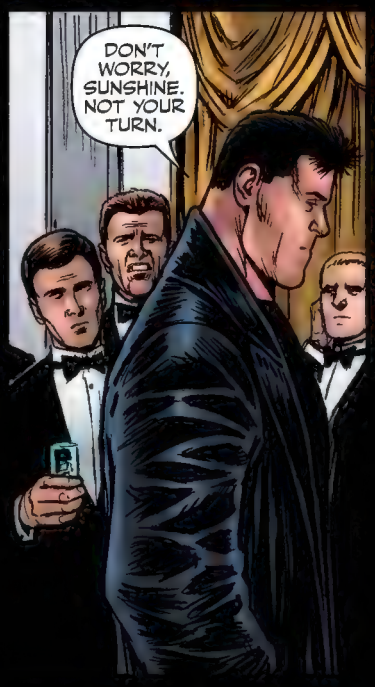
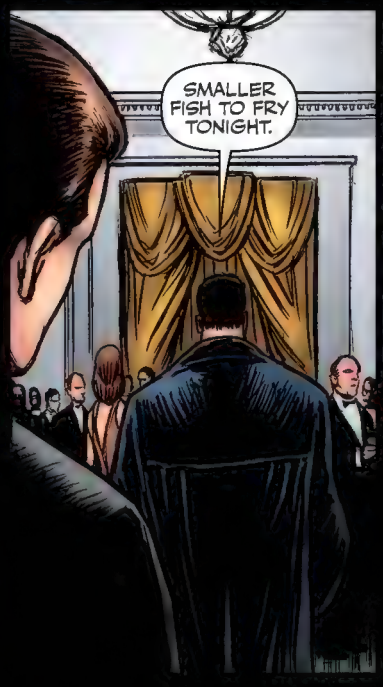
HOW'S THE PINOT?
RANCID. HOW'S PAKISTAN?
SEE ABOVE.
THE GOVERNMENT'S JUST ABOUT HOLDING IT TOGETHER. OBVIOUSLY THEY'RE NOT TOO POPULAR FOR LETTING US GO HUNTING IN THE NORTH, BUT WE MAKE IT WORTH THEIR WHILE.
I KNOW. I'VE SEEN THE CHECKS.
YOU HAVE TO HAND IT TO THE PRESIDENT, IT'S A BRILLIANT IDEA: PAY THEM TO LET US INVADE. AND ALL THESE UNDESIRABLES WE SPIRIT AWAY TO ALASKA, THAT DOESN'T HURT THE RELATIONSHIP EITHER.
"ENEMY COMBATANT", THAT'S A PRETTY BIG NET, ISN'T IT?
OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND. THE GENUINE ARTICLE DOES TEND TO MAKE IT ACROSS TO AFGHANISTAN IN IRRITATINGLY LARGE NUMBERS, BUT I THINK STAYING OUT WAS THE RIGHT DECISION. THAT PLACE JUST SWALLOWS ARMIES.
IN THAT CASE, THE NOTION OF IRAQ MUST GIVE YOU A SPECIAL LITTLE TINGLE...
COME ON, THAT WAS NEVER ON THE CARDS, WAS IT?
OUR OTHER HOST WAS VERY KEEN FOR A WHILE. OR HIS KEEPERS WERE, AT ANY RATE.
YES, I'M SURE THEY WERE. "CAPES OVER BAGHDAD". BY THE WAY, I HAVE A QUESTION.
MM?
WHY ALL THIS FOR THAT?

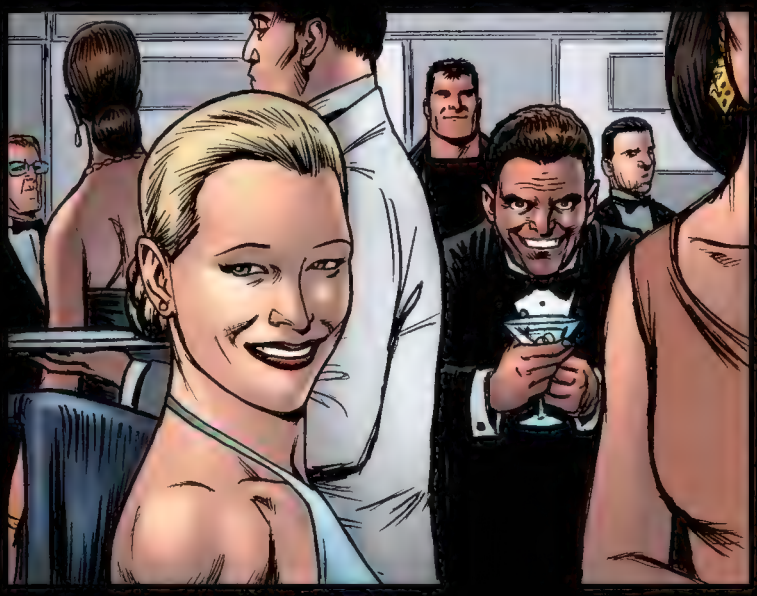

AH.
WELL, IT WOULD APPEAR THEIR RANKS ARE SWELLING. AND THIS MIGHT AMUSE YOU, IT'S YOUR ADVENTURE IN THE LAND OF THE I.E.D. THAT'S LARGELY RESPONSIBLE.
OH, OF COURSE. ADVANCES IN BATTLEFIELD MEDICINE, THAT'S THE PHRASE I KEEP HEARING.
YOU KNOW, I SEE SOME OF THESE TRUNKS WITH HEADS BEING CARRIED OFF THE MEDEVACS, AND I CAN'T HELP THINKING...WELL.
I'M NOT SURE OF THE EXACT FIGURES, BUT I BELIEVE THEY'RE NOW SOMEWHERE BETWEEN A CROSS-SECTION AND A COMMUNITY. SO WHEN A PARTICULARLY PRETTY ONE POPS UP IN AN ELECTION YEAR...
YOU KNOW, I WAS WONDERING WHY I'D BEEN INVITED TONIGHT, BUT IT'S STARTING TO MAKE A KIND OF WRETCHED SENSE. ARE YOU AWARE THERE'S A MOVEMENT AFOOT TO LET THEM INTO THE SERVICES?
WHAT?
WOMEN AND HOMOS I JUST ABOUT GET--HELL, I CAN EVEN MAKE USE OF THEM, SO LONG AS THEY CAN CARRY A RIFLE. BUT THIS IS INSANITY.
DAKOTA BOB DOES IT AGAIN, TWO BIRDS WITH ONE GODDAMNED STONE...

HHHH. WHAT WAS WRONG WITH GOOD OLD RECYCLED MARYLAND HILL TRASH?

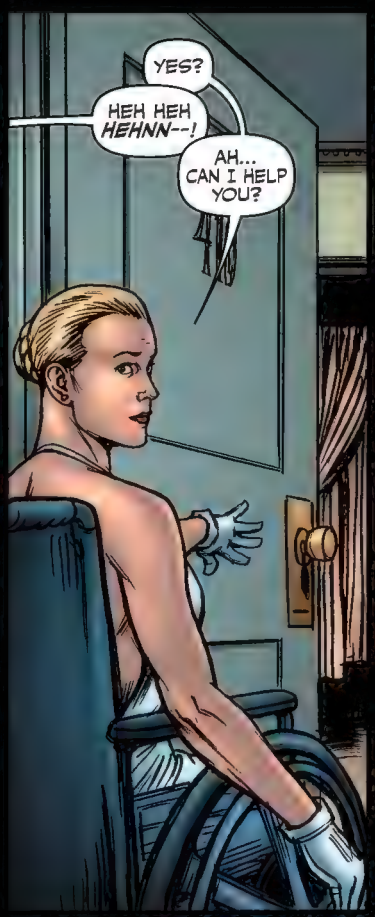
ALL RIGHT?


DON'T WORRY, SUNSHINE. NOT YOUR TURN.


SMALLER FISH TO FRY TONIGHT.



MS. BRAND...?


YES?
HEH HEH HEHNN--!
AH... CAN I HELP YOU?

OH, I THINK SO, YES. I THINK SO.
MY NAME'S DIRECTOR KESSLER, HEHHNN, I'M A VERY IMPORTANT MAN...

I'M SORRY, DIRECTOR OF WHAT?
I'VE...ALWAYS ADMIRED YOU FROM AFAR...
PARDON ME?
I SAW YOU IN MOSCOW, OH YES. I WATCHED YOU TAKE THE GOLD IN SINGAPORE.

I WATCHED YOU AT THE PARTY TONIGHT AND, AND I KNEW THIS WAS MEANT TO BE. BEING SO CLOSE TO YOU AT LAST, I...I JUST CAN'T FIGHT IT ANY LONGER...
IT'S-- DESTINY--!

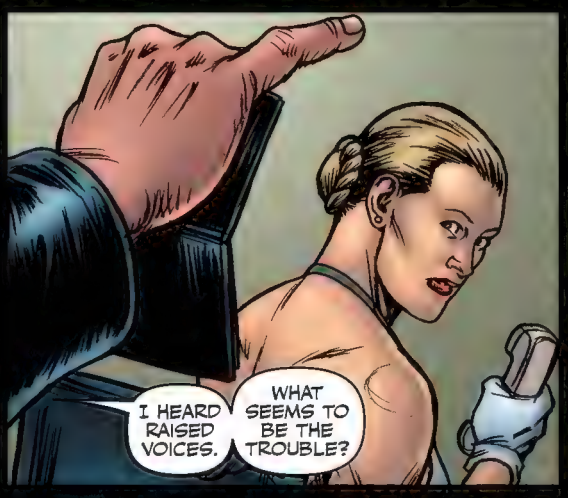
410
HHEEEEHHHNNNNHHH!!
HEY!
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE--
I WANT TO MAKE LOVE TO YOUR LITTLE BROKEN BODY!
WHAT?!
I WANT TO LICK THE PUS FROM YOUR BEDSORES!
I DON'T HAVE BEDSORES! GOD, WHAT KIND OF CRAZY PERSON ARE YOU, ANYWAY?
THERE'S A MAN, A MAN, HE KICKED ME SO MUCH MY JUNK DOESN'T WORK! THAT'S HOW I UNDERSTAND YOU, DARLING, THAT'S HOW I KNOW YOUR PAIN!
THAT'S WHY I HAVE TO USE THIS!!
BUT WE'LL OVERCOME IT, NIKKI--WE'LL DO IT TOGETHER, WON'T WE--?
GOD, YOU'VE ALREADY OVERCOME SO MUCH--

BUUHHH!

HNNHH!

YOU DISGUSTING LITTLE REPTILE I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT

HELLO? I SAID I WANTED HOTEL SEC--
THAT'S ALL RIGHT, MA'AM.

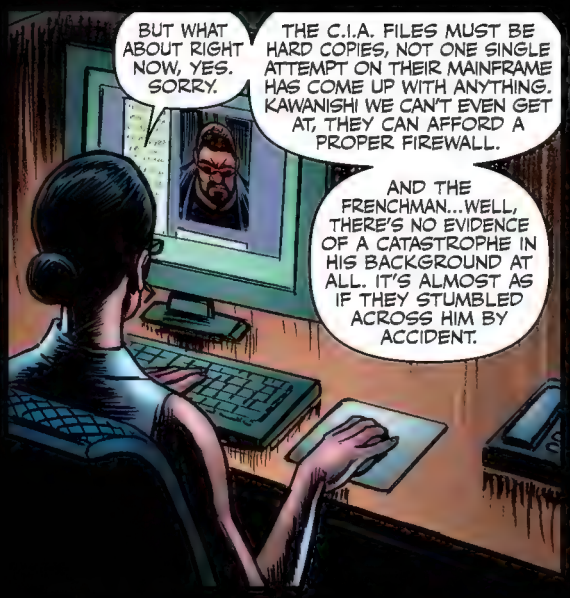

I HEARD RAISED VOICES.
WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE?

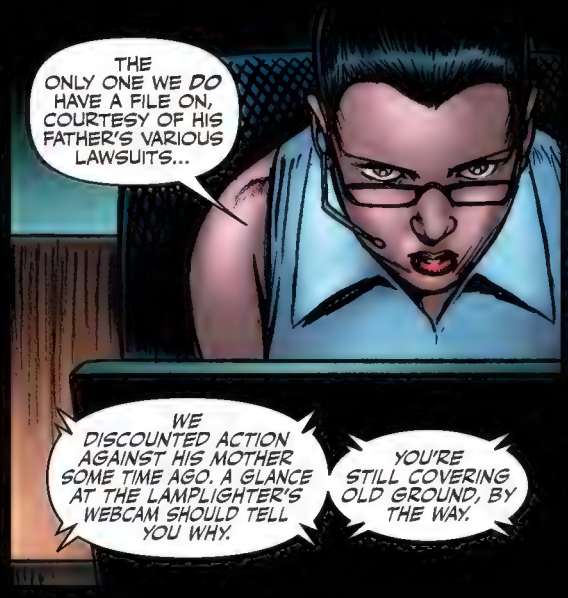
HE WAS?
MY GOD.

COINCIDENCE, ACTUALLY, BECAUSE I'M LOOKING AT HIS PROFILE RIGHT NOW. WHAT THERE IS OF IT.
NO, WE NEVER HAD MUCH LUCK IN THAT REGARD.
M.I.5 MUST HAVE MOVED AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT...

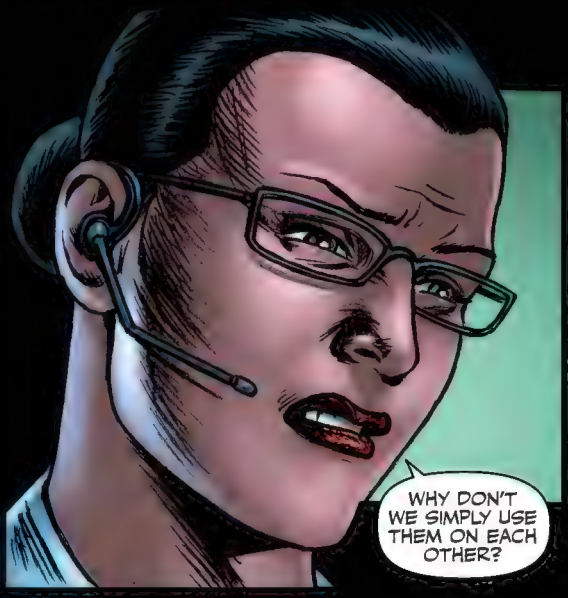
Butcher, W
unknown
I'M GUESSING THAT THE FILE WAS SEALED THE INSTANT MALLORY CALLED THEM BACK. PROBABLY HANDED IT OVER ALONG WITH THE SUBJECT, GLAD TO SEE THE BACK OF BOTH.
I WOULD IMAGINE THE SAME THING HAPPENED WITH CAMPBELL, AS SOON AS BUTCHER TOOK AN INTEREST.
HMH. IT'S NOT A MILLION MILES FROM THE WAY OUR RESPONSE TEAMS OPERATE, IS IT?

ONCE THEY GET THE SCRAMBLE ORDER, I MEAN. AND THE OBJECTIVE'S THE SAME, TOO, IT'S ALL ABOUT RECRUITMENT.
YOU KNOW, IT OCCURS TO ME THAT WE SHOULD PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE SURVIVORS OF SOME OF THESE INCIDENTS; IF WE'D KEPT AN EYE ON CAMPBELL AFTER THE THING WITH A-TRAIN, WE MIGHT HAVE SAVED OURSELVES A LOT OF TROUBLE...
THAT IS AN EXCELLENT POINT, AND I SUGGEST YOU IMPLEMENT A PROCEDURE.

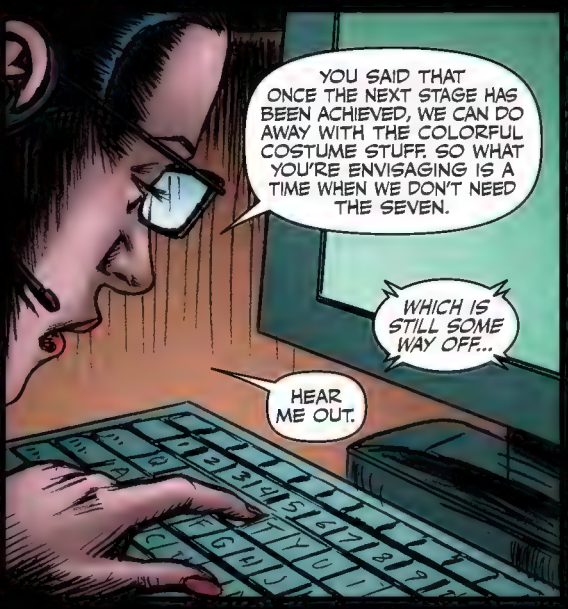

BUT WHAT ABOUT RIGHT NOW, YES. SORRY.
THE C.I.A. FILES MUST BE HARD COPIES, NOT ONE SINGLE ATTEMPT ON THEIR MAINFRAME HAS COME UP WITH ANYTHING. KAWANISHI WE CAN'T EVEN GET AT, THEY CAN AFFORD A PROPER FIREWALL.
AND THE FRENCHMAN...WELL, THERE'S NO EVIDENCE OF A CATASTROPHE IN HIS BACKGROUND AT ALL. IT'S ALMOST AS IF THEY STUMBLED ACROSS HIM BY ACCIDENT.

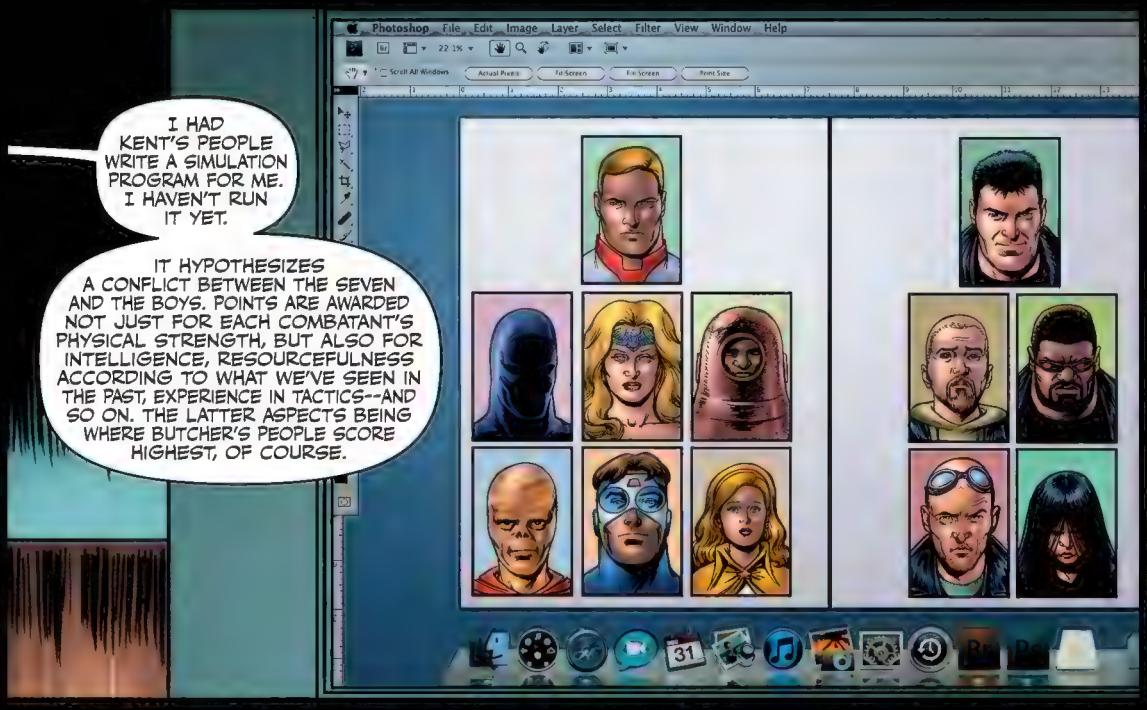

THE ONLY ONE WE DO HAVE A FILE ON, COURTESY OF HIS FATHER'S VARIOUS LAWSUITS...
WE DISCOUNTED ACTION AGAINST HIS MOTHER SOME TIME AGO. A GLANCE AT THE LAMPLIGHTER'S WEBCAM SHOULD TELL YOU WHY.
YOU'RE STILL COVERING OLD GROUND, BY THE WAY.

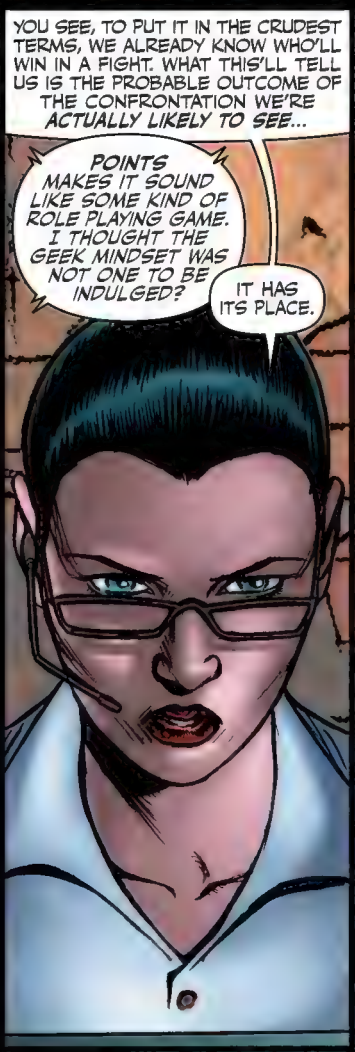
I KNOW.
ALL RIGHT, HERE IT IS. YOU SAID THAT NO ONE'S EVER MANAGED TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF THE BOYS. AND SO THEY AND THE SEVEN HAVE REMAINED LOCKED INTO THEIR...TRUCE.
WHAT I'M WONDERING IS--


WHY DON'T WE SIMPLY USE THEM ON EACH OTHER?

HELLO...?
I'M LISTENING.


YOU SAID THAT ONCE THE NEXT STAGE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED, WE CAN DO AWAY WITH THE COLORFUL COSTUME STUFF. SO WHAT YOU'RE ENVISAGING IS A TIME WHEN WE DON'T NEED THE SEVEN.
WHICH IS STILL SOME WAY OFF...
HEAR ME OUT.


I HAD KENT'S PEOPLE WRITE A SIMULATION PROGRAM FOR ME. I HAVEN'T RUN IT YET.
IT HYPOTHESIZES A CONFLICT BETWEEN THE SEVEN AND THE BOYS. POINTS ARE AWARDED NOT JUST FOR EACH COMBATANT'S PHYSICAL STRENGTH, BUT ALSO FOR INTELLIGENCE, RESOURCEFULNESS ACCORDING TO WHAT WE'VE SEEN IN THE PAST, EXPERIENCE IN TACTICS--AND SO ON. THE LATTER ASPECTS BEING WHERE BUTCHER'S PEOPLE SCORE HIGHEST, OF COURSE.


YOU SEE, TO PUT IT IN THE CRUDEST TERMS, WE ALREADY KNOW WHO'LL WIN IN A FIGHT. WHAT THIS'LL TELL US IS THE PROBABLE OUTCOME OF THE CONFRONTATION WE'RE ACTUALLY LIKELY TO SEE...
POINTS MAKES IT SOUND LIKE SOME KIND OF ROLE PLAYING GAME. I THOUGHT THE GEEK MINDSET WAS NOT ONE TO BE INDULGED?
IT HAS ITS PLACE.

LOOK, I REALLY BELIEVE THIS IS WORTH DOING, THE PROGRAM IS EXHAUSTIVELY COMPREHENSIVE...
ALL RIGHT, RUN IT.

GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE ALREADY MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR AUTONOMY, MS. BRADLEY.
GOODNIGHT.

HUH.

UH... UUHHHH...?

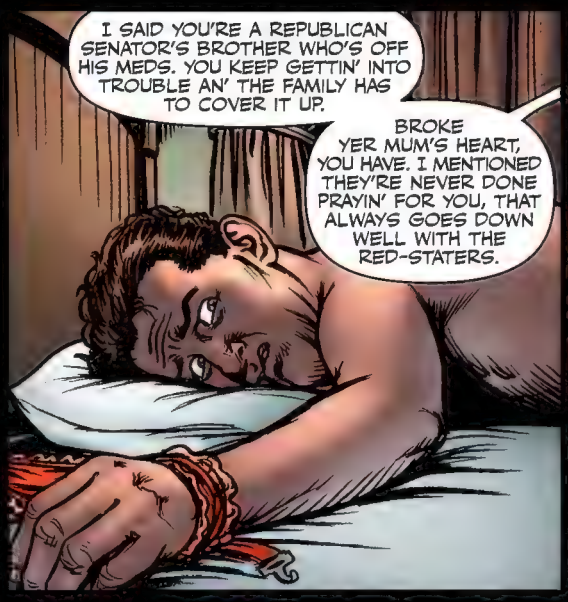
BLOODY HELL! MONKEY!

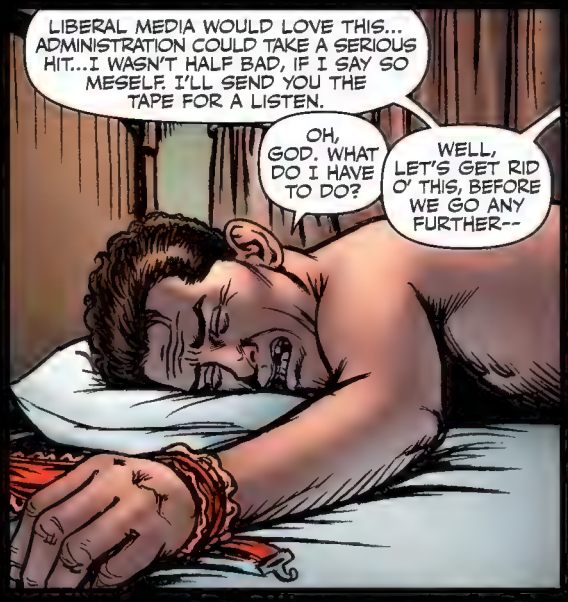
AAH--NAAH--WH-WH-WH-WH--?
JESUS, WHAT A STATE TO GET INTO...!

I MEAN SHE SAID SHE RESTRAINED YOU, I DIDN'T THINK SHE'D TIED YOU DOWN WITH YER Y-FRONTS ROUND YER ANKLES AN' STUCK A DILDO UP YER ARSE...

IS... SHE...?
RELAX, SON, I MANAGED TO CALM HER DOWN. PUT ON ME CRAP YANK ACCENT AN' FLASHED ME I.D., TOLD HER I WAS SECRET SERVICE.
SHE'S IN THE BAR HAVIN' A BRANDY. DON'T WORRY, IT'S ON ME.

YOU'RE BLOODY LUCKY I CHANCED BY, REALLY. IF THIS EVER GOT OUT, WELL, I DREAD TO THINK WHAT'D HAPPEN.
WHAT DID YOU TELL HER...?


I SAID YOU'RE A REPUBLICAN SENATOR'S BROTHER WHO'S OFF HIS MEDS. YOU KEEP GETTIN' INTO TROUBLE AN' THE FAMILY HAS TO COVER IT UP.
BROKE YER MUM'S HEART, YOU HAVE. I MENTIONED THEY'RE NEVER DONE PRAYIN' FOR YOU, THAT ALWAYS GOES DOWN WELL WITH THE RED-STATERS.

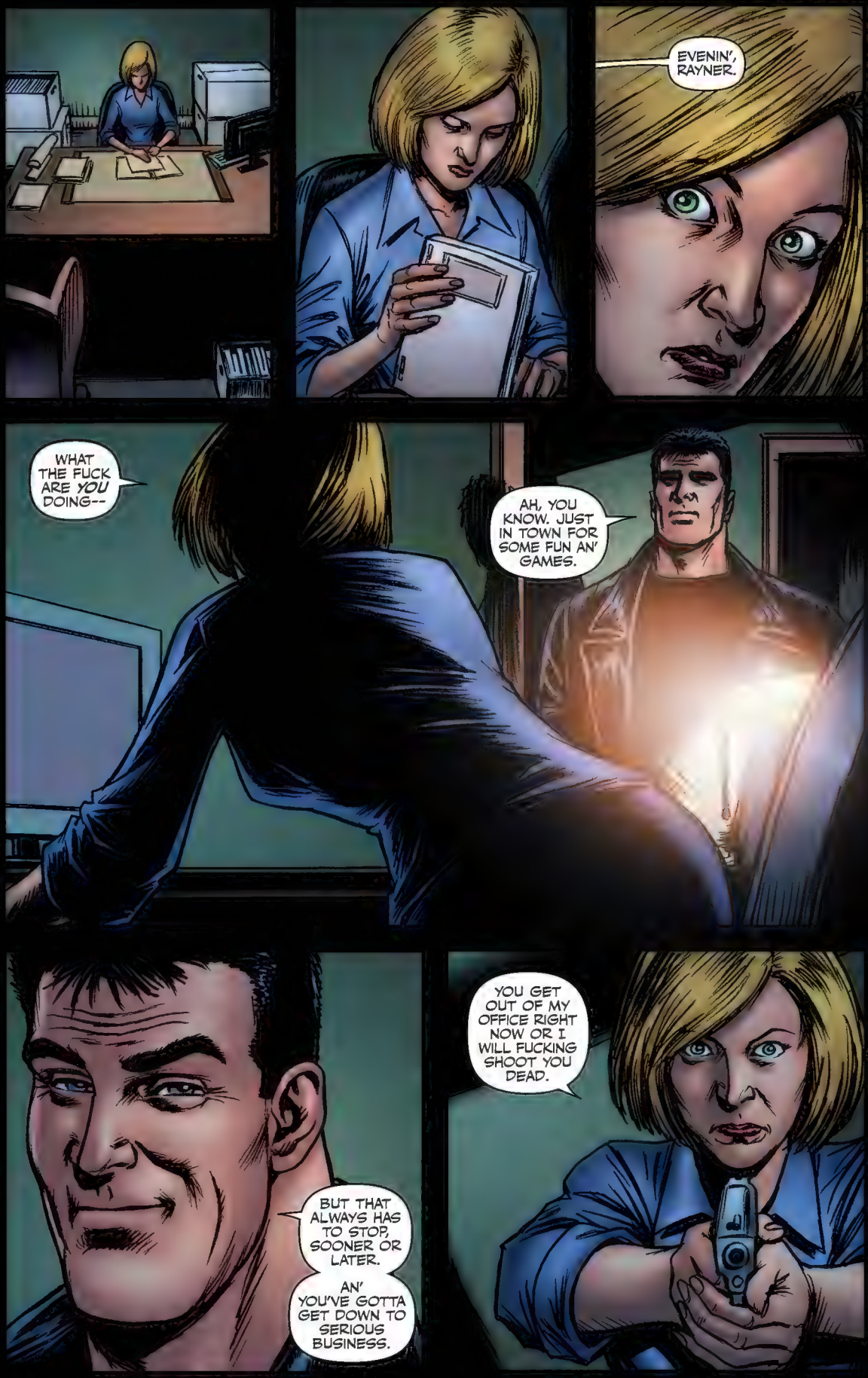

LIBERAL MEDIA WOULD LOVE THIS... ADMINISTRATION COULD TAKE A SERIOUS HIT...I WASN'T HALF BAD, IF I SAY SO MESELF. I'LL SEND YOU THE TAPE FOR A LISTEN.
OH, GOD. WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?
WELL, LET'S GET RID O' THIS, BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER--

OOOOHH--!
THERE.
YOU'RE GONNA BE A GOOD LITTLE C.I.A. DIRECTOR, AIN'T YOU? THERE'S NOT GONNA BE ANY MORE OLD BOLLOCKS ABOUT EXPENSES OR ANY O' THAT.

...OKAY...
AN' YOU AIN'T GONNA COME INTO MY OFFICE AN' TRY AN' MAKE A CUNT O' ME AGAIN. THAT'S A DEFINITE NO-NO, MONKEY, THAT REALLY DID PISS ME OFF.

AS A MATTER O' FACT, JUST WHILE I'VE GOT YOU...TERROR?
WUFF!
TERROR, MATE.

FUCK IT...!

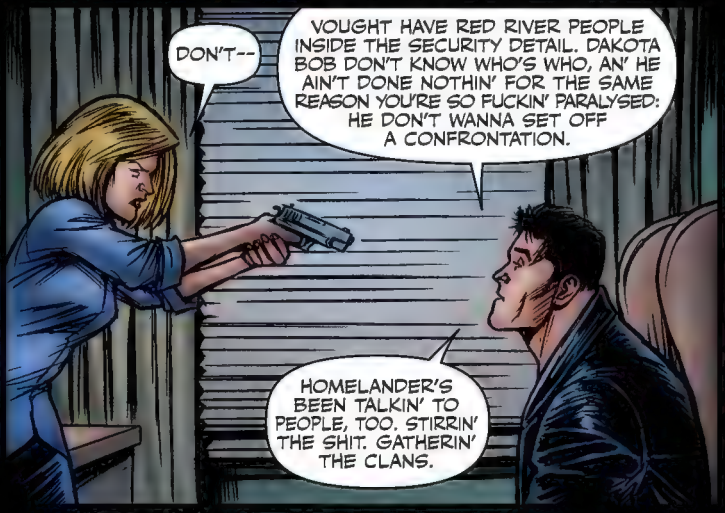

EVENIN', RAYNER.
WHAT THE FUCK ARE *YOU* DOING--
AH, YOU KNOW. JUST IN TOWN FOR SOME FUN AN' GAMES.
BUT THAT ALWAYS HAS TO STOP, SOONER OR LATER.
AN' YOU'VE GOTTA GET DOWN TO SERIOUS BUSINESS.
YOU GET OUT OF MY OFFICE RIGHT NOW OR I WILL FUCKING SHOOT YOU DEAD.

BIT EXTREME, INNIT?
FUCK YOU--!
MIND YOU, MOVIN' MONKEY UP JUST TO PISS ME OFF, GOD ALONE KNOWS WHAT YOU'RE CAPABLE OF...

FUCK YOU, YOU EVIL COCKSUCKER, THE LAST TIME YOU CAME HERE YOU SAID YOU'D KILL MY CHILDREN!
I AM GOING TO COUNT TO FIVE, AND IF YOU'RE NOT GONE BY THEN--

I SWEAR TO CHRIST I WILL *EMPTY THIS GODDAMN THING...!*

THERE'S TROUBLE COMIN'.
I DUNNO IF IT'S VOUGHT OR THE SUPES TOGETHER OR SEPARATE, BUT IT'S COMIN'.

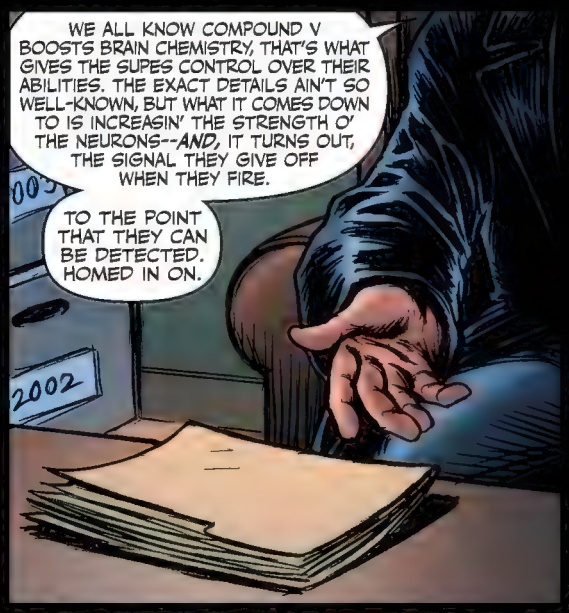

DON'T--
VOUGHT HAVE RED RIVER PEOPLE INSIDE THE SECURITY DETAIL. DAKOTA BOB DON'T KNOW WHO'S WHO, AN' HE AIN'T DONE NOTHIN' FOR THE SAME REASON YOU'RE SO FUCKIN' PARALYSED: HE DON'T WANNA SET OFF A CONFRONTATION.
HOMELANDER'S BEEN TALKIN' TO PEOPLE, TOO. STIRRIN' THE SHIT. GATHERIN' THE CLANS.

THINK IT MIGHT BE TIME THAT YOU AN' BOB FACED FACTS?

I'LL BE GONE IN LESS THAN A MONTH...
SO WILL HALF THE EASTERN SEABOARD, IF THESE CUNTS HAVE TO BE STOPPED THE HARD WAY.

COME ON--!
NO? THE G-MEN WERE ONE THING; IMAGINE EVERY SUPE COMIN' AT YOU AT ONCE IN A *COORDINATED ATTACK.* POWER ON, SHIELDS UP, ALL THAT BOLLOCKS.
NO ELEMENT OF SURPRISE ON THIS ONE, RAYNER. HOW FAR'S D.U. AMMO LIKELY TO TAKE YOU THEN?

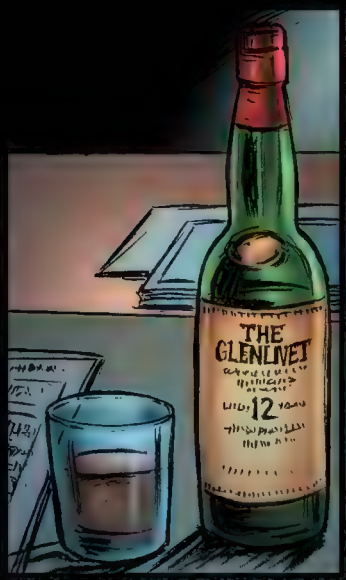
NOW.


WE ALL KNOW COMPOUND V BOOSTS BRAIN CHEMISTRY, THAT'S WHAT GIVES THE SUPES CONTROL OVER THEIR ABILITIES. THE EXACT DETAILS AIN'T SO WELL-KNOWN, BUT WHAT IT COMES DOWN TO IS INCREASIN' THE STRENGTH O' THE NEURONS--*AND,* IT TURNS OUT, THE SIGNAL THEY GIVE OFF WHEN THEY FIRE.
TO THE POINT THAT THEY CAN BE DETECTED. HOMED IN ON.
2002

BY A RADAR-GUIDED MISSILE, IF YOU ADAPT IT PROPERLY.
SORTA THING YOU MIGHT STICK UNDER AN F-16.

HOW THE HELL DO YOU KNOW THIS?

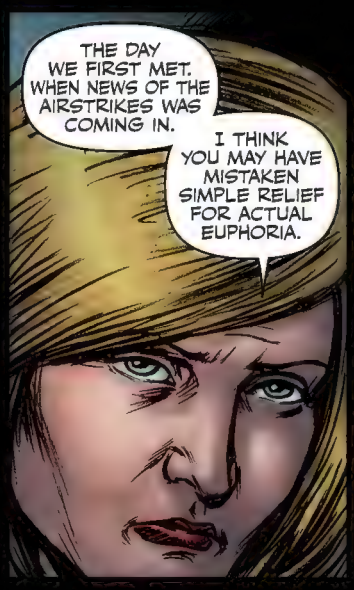
JONAH VOGELBAUM NOTICED IT ORIGINALLY. LOT MORE WORK'S BEEN DONE SINCE.
BY WHOM?
WHY ARE YOU GIVING THIS TO ME...?
WELL, YOU PASS IT ON TO THE AIR FORCE, IN TIME FOR THEM TO GET TOOLED UP FOR...WHATEVER IT IS... YOU'RE GONNA HAVE A LOT O' MATES WHEN YOU MAKE YER RUN FOR THE SENATE.
I'M GONNA NEED YOU WHEREVER YOU END UP. WHICH LET'S FACE IT, AIN'T EVER GONNA BE FAR FROM THE DRIVIN' SEAT.
I MEAN HOW MUCH USE IS MONKEY GONNA BE TO ME, REALLY?
YOU TOLD ME...
COME ON. I WAS ROYALLY FUCKED OFF, BUT I AIN'T GONNA KILL ANYONE'S KIDS.
THAT'S YOUR GAME, REMEMBER?
WHAT?

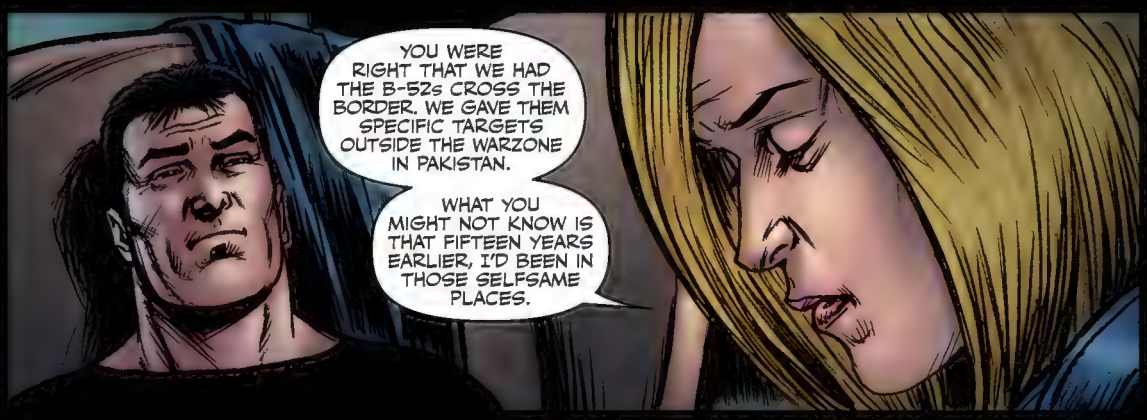

THE GLENLIVET
12

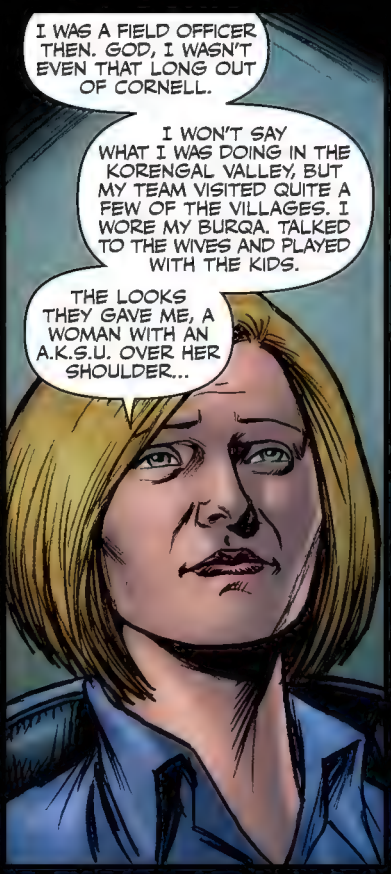
THIS-- MM--
IT MAKES SENSE, INASMUCH AS I'M ABLE TO FOLLOW THE TECHNICAL JARGON. I SUPPOSE YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TELL ME HOW YOU GOT IT?

NO.
OKAY.

ABOUT... AFGHANISTAN.


THE DAY WE FIRST MET. WHEN NEWS OF THE AIRSTRIKES WAS COMING IN.
I THINK YOU MAY HAVE MISTAKEN SIMPLE RELIEF FOR ACTUAL EUPHORIA.

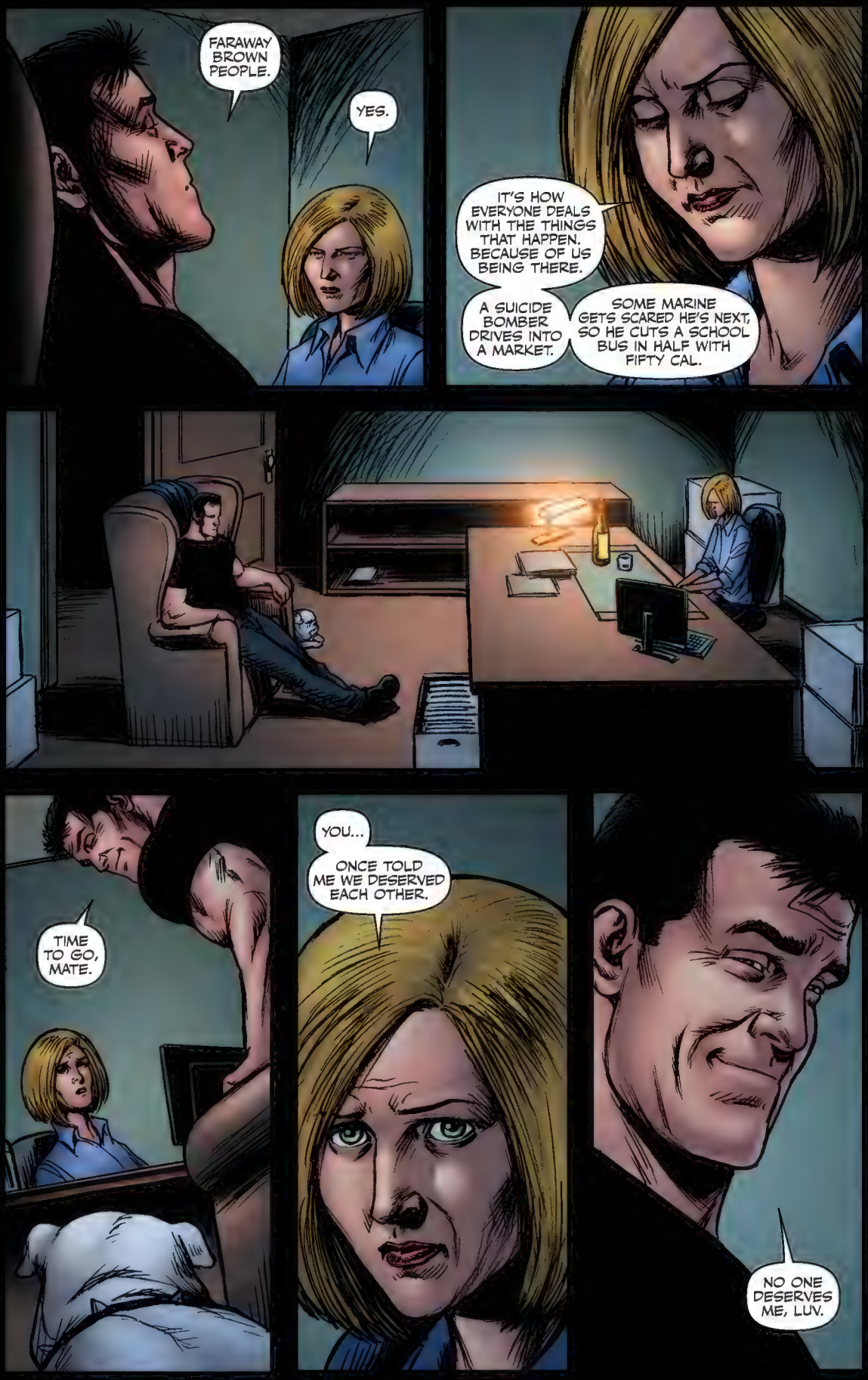

YOU WERE RIGHT THAT WE HAD THE B-52s CROSS THE BORDER. WE GAVE THEM SPECIFIC TARGETS OUTSIDE THE WARZONE IN PAKISTAN.
WHAT YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW IS THAT FIFTEEN YEARS EARLIER, I'D BEEN IN THOSE SELFSAME PLACES.


I WAS A FIELD OFFICER THEN. GOD, I WASN'T EVEN THAT LONG OUT OF CORNELL.
I WON'T SAY WHAT I WAS DOING IN THE KORENGAL VALLEY, BUT MY TEAM VISITED QUITE A FEW OF THE VILLAGES. I WORE MY BURQA. TALKED TO THE WIVES AND PLAYED WITH THE KIDS.
THE LOOKS THEY GAVE ME, A WOMAN WITH AN A.K.S.U. OVER HER SHOULDER...

I FELT LIKE FUCKING CALAMITY JANE.
JESUS, THOSE KIDS WERE AMAZING.

YOU KNOW... GIVEN OUR MUSLIM BROTHERS' PROPENSITY FOR STICKING IT INTO YOUNG PUSSY...
THE STRIKES I ORDERED PROBABLY TOOK OUT THE CHILDREN OF THE CHILDREN I HELD.

BUT THE FACT IS, WE DO DIRTY WORK TO KEEP THE WORLD CLEAN. WE TAKE THAT BURDEN ON OURSELVES AND WE EXPECT NO THANKS.
AND IF WE'RE TO GO ON DOING THAT, IF WE'RE TO PUT OURSELVES IN PLACES WERE WE CAN DO THE MOST GOOD, WE *CAN'T* HAVE ARRANGEMENTS FROM THE PAST COMING BACK TO COMPROMISE US. SO WE CLEAN HOUSE.
AND WE RATIONALIZE IT. I FREELY ADMIT THAT. WE COMPARTMENTALIZE IT IN OUR MINDS... AS...


FARAWAY BROWN PEOPLE.
YES.
IT'S HOW EVERYONE DEALS WITH THE THINGS THAT HAPPEN. BECAUSE OF US BEING THERE.
A SUICIDE BOMBER DRIVES INTO A MARKET.
SOME MARINE GETS SCARED HE'S NEXT, SO HE CUTS A SCHOOL BUS IN HALF WITH FIFTY CAL.
TIME TO GO, MATE.
YOU...
ONCE TOLD ME WE DESERVED EACH OTHER.
NO ONE DESERVES ME, LUV.

PROBABLY BEST IF YOU STICK TO THE PHONE FROM NOW ON. OR EMAIL.
WHAT...?
WELL, COME ON. LANGLEY'S ONE THING, BUT YOU AIN'T GONNA WANT THE LIKES O' ME DROPPIN' BY WHEN YOU'RE ON CAPITOL HILL, ARE YOU?

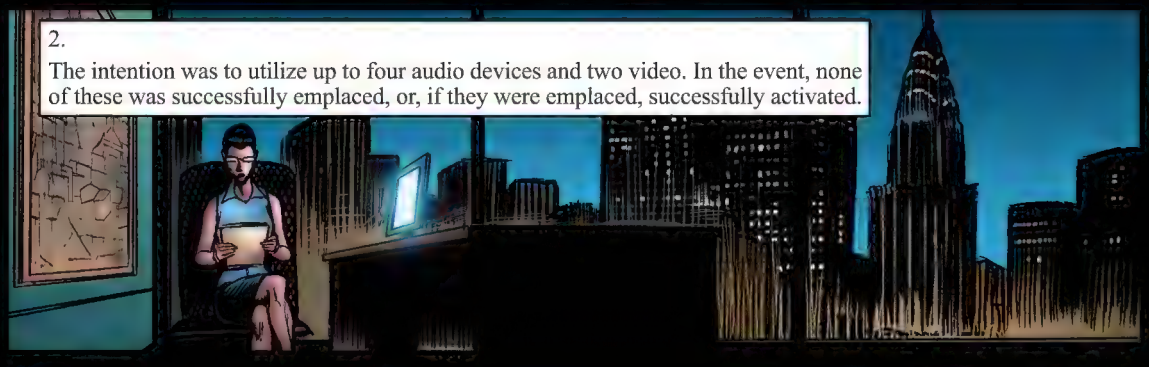
COME ON, TERROR.
OFF WE GO, MATE.

...DO YOU HAVE TO GO?

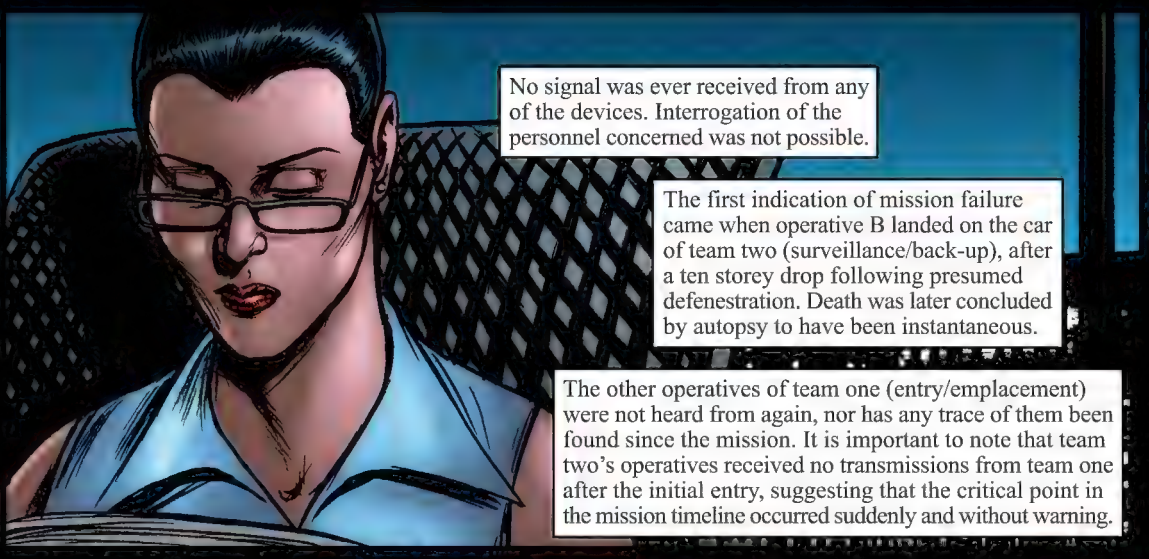
RIGHT THIS MOMENT, I MEAN?

UH... NAH.
S'POSE NOT.

AFTER ALL, WHAT'S THE RUSH, EH?



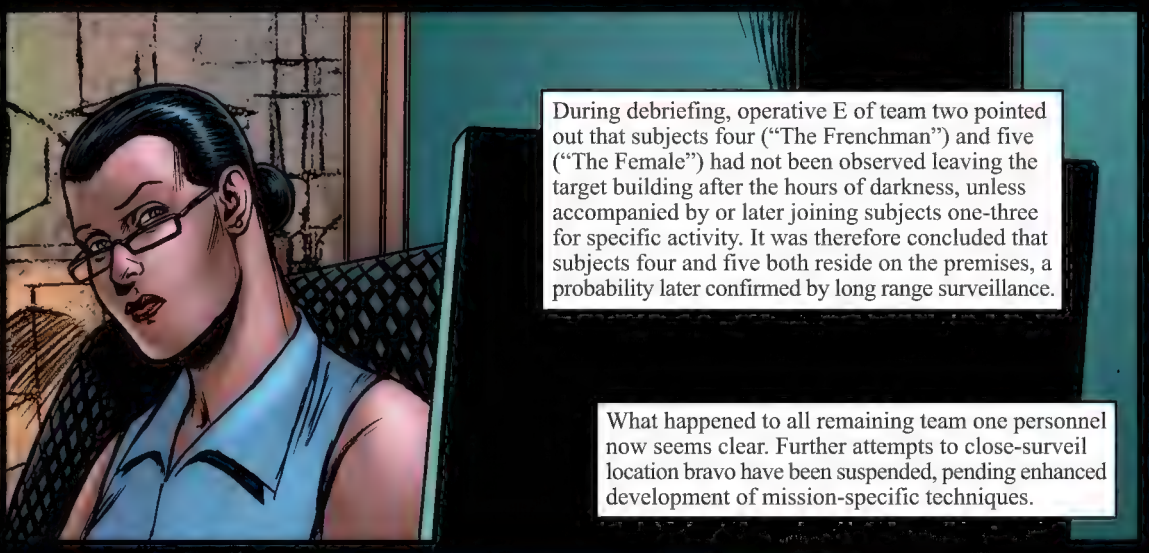
2.
The intention was to utilize up to four audio devices and two video. In the event, none of these was successfully emplaced, or, if they were emplaced, successfully activated.



No signal was ever received from any of the devices. Interrogation of the personnel concerned was not possible.

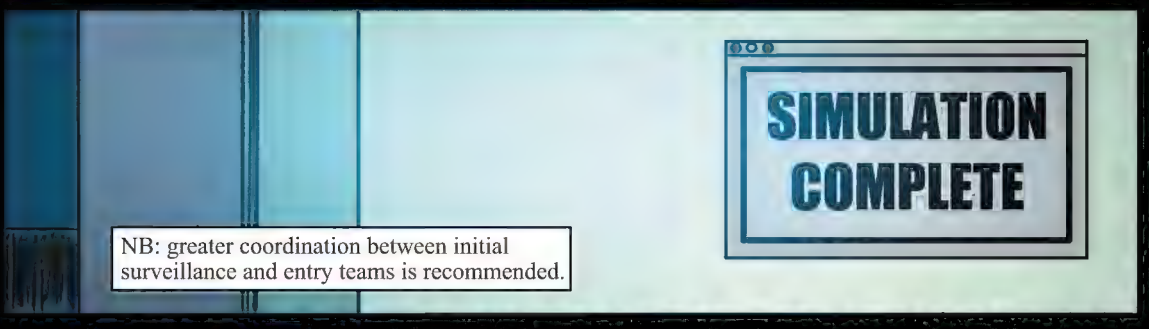
The first indication of mission failure came when operative B landed on the car of team two (surveillance/back-up), after a ten storey drop following presumed defenestration. Death was later concluded by autopsy to have been instantaneous.

The other operatives of team one (entry/emplacement) were not heard from again, nor has any trace of them been found since the mission. It is important to note that team two's operatives received no transmissions from team one after the initial entry, suggesting that the critical point in the mission timeline occurred suddenly and without warning.

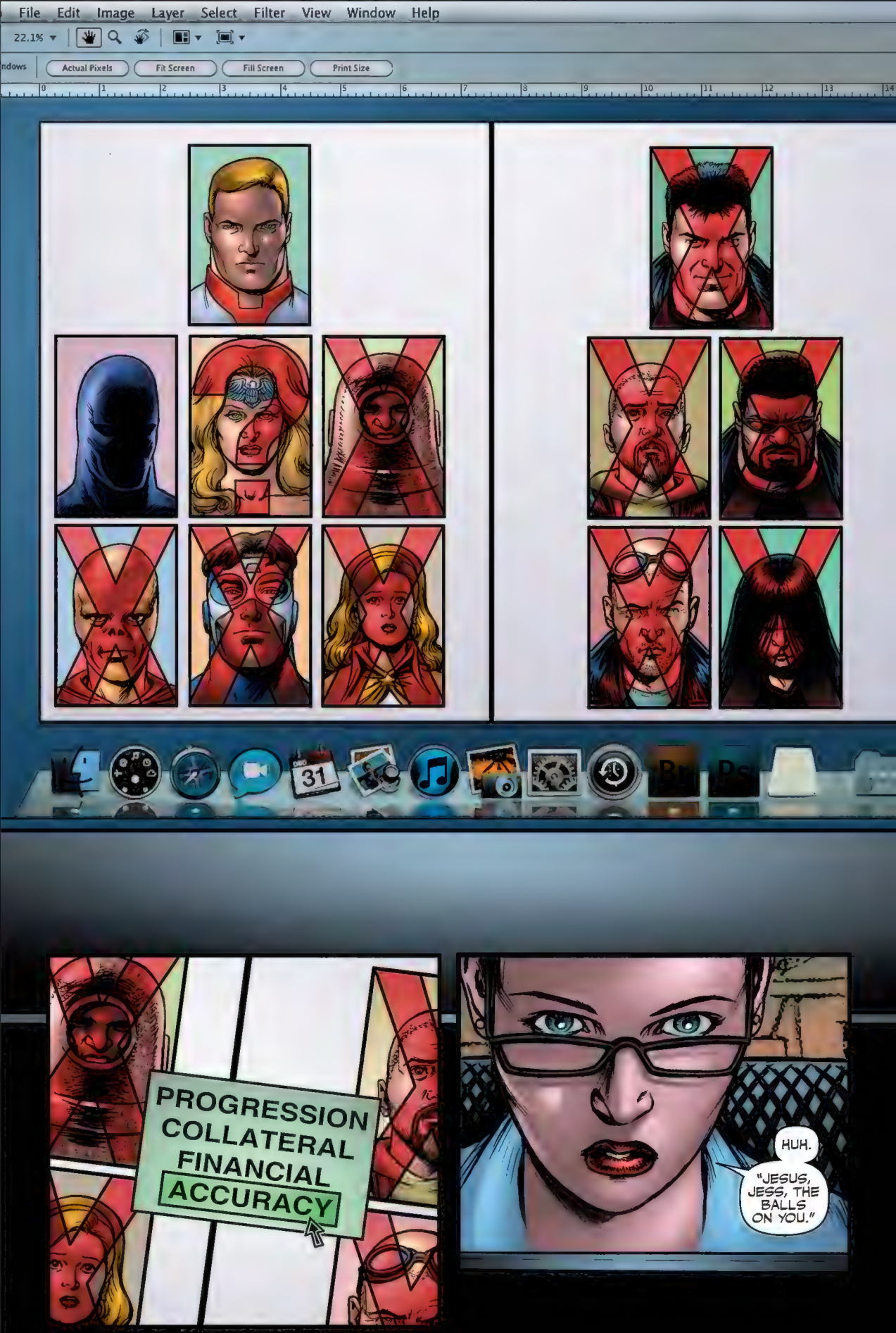


During debriefing, operative E of team two pointed out that subjects four ("The Frenchman") and five ("The Female") had not been observed leaving the target building after the hours of darkness, unless accompanied by or later joining subjects one-three for specific activity. It was therefore concluded that subjects four and five both reside on the premises, a probability later confirmed by long range surveillance.

What happened to all remaining team one personnel now seems clear. Further attempts to close-surveil location bravo have been suspended, pending enhanced development of mission-specific techniques.



NB: greater coordination between initial surveillance and entry teams is recommended.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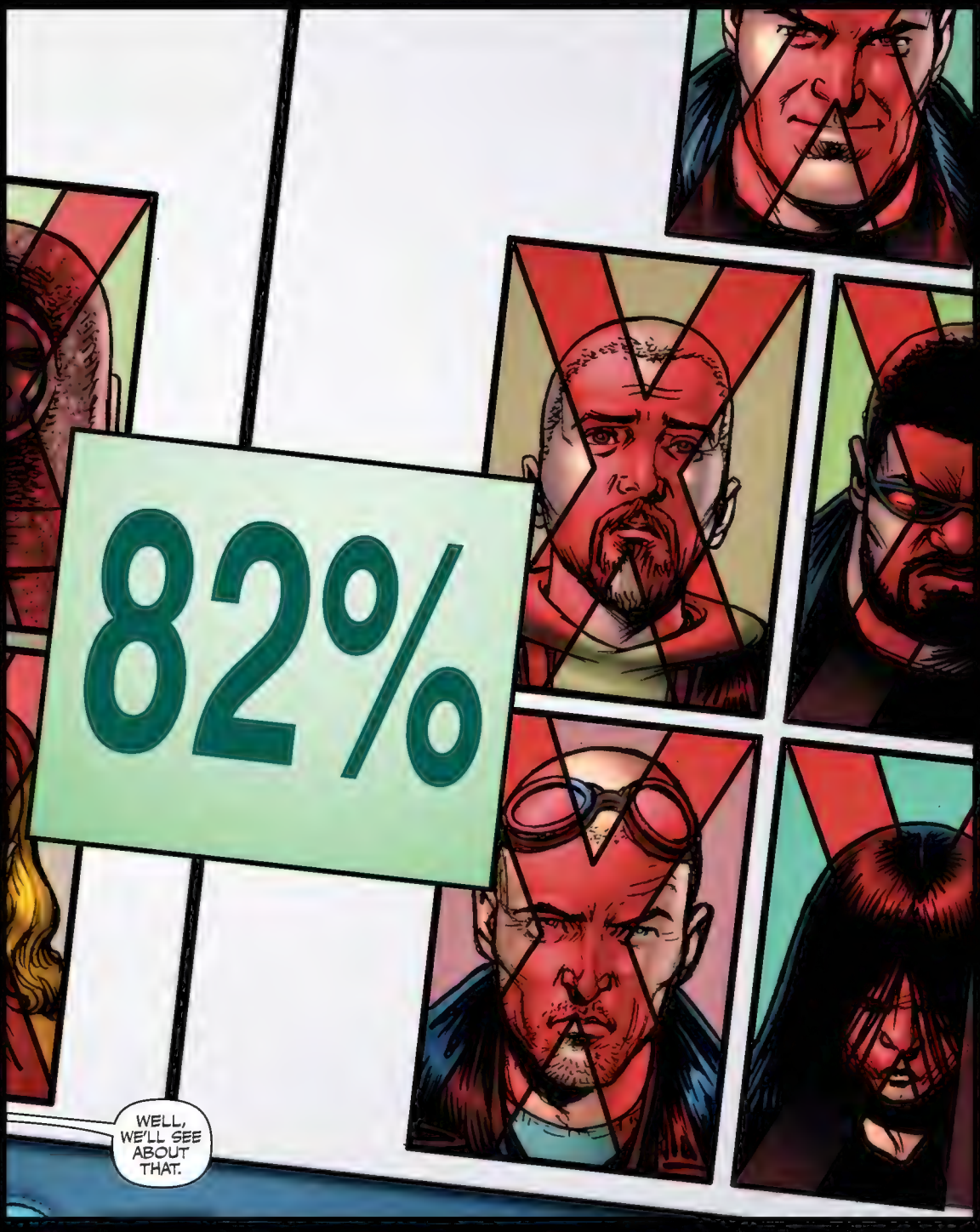
Print Size
PROGRESSION
COLLATERAL
FINANCIAL
ACCURACY
HUH.
"JESUS, JESS, THE BALLS ON YOU."



PROPER PREPARATION AND PLANNING

conclusion

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FIFTY-TWO

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That's when you call in The Boys.

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Inks by:
KEITH BURNS with JOHN McCREA

Letters by:
SIMON BOWLAND

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The Boys Created by:
ENNIS & ROBERTSON

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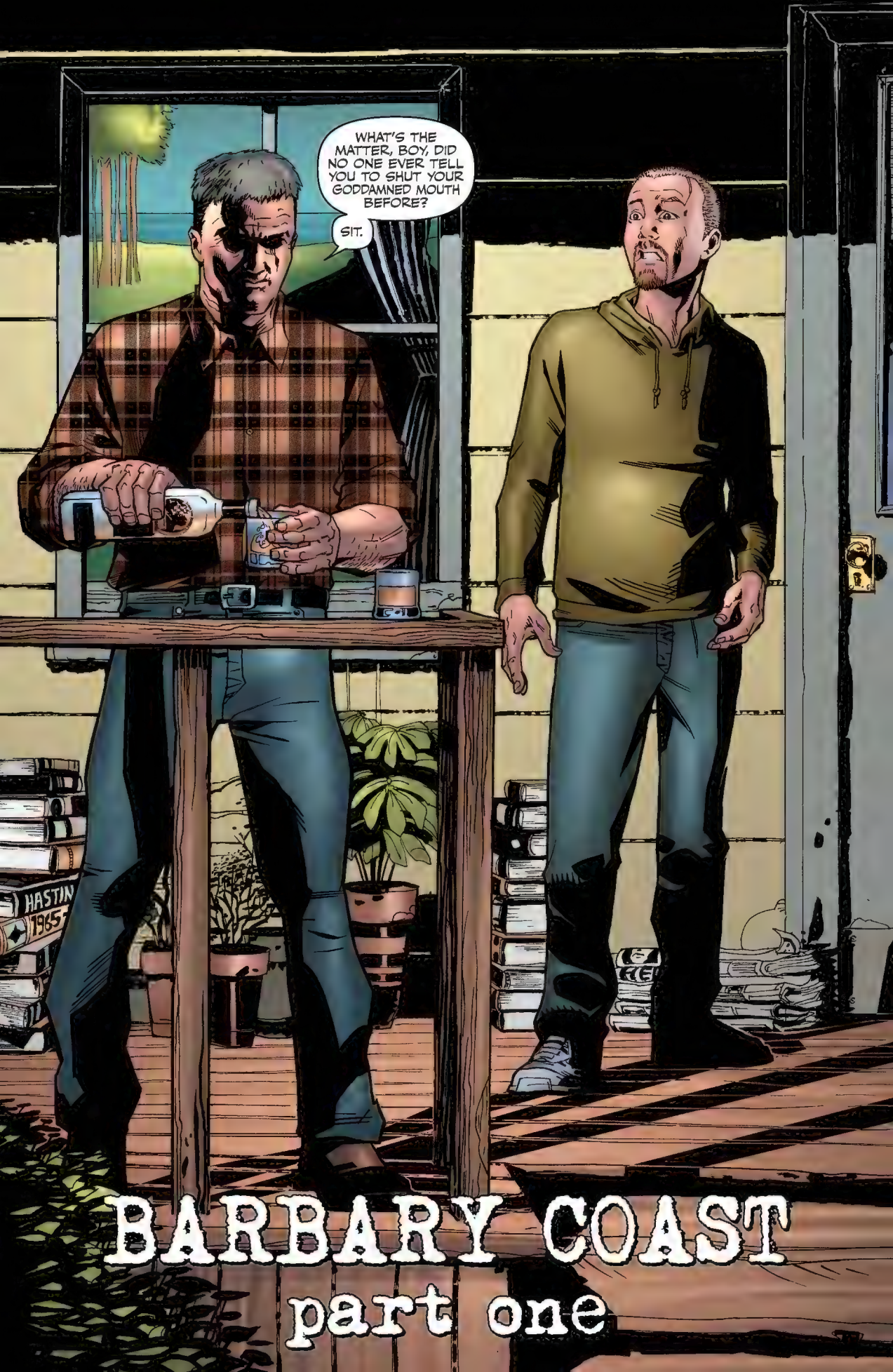
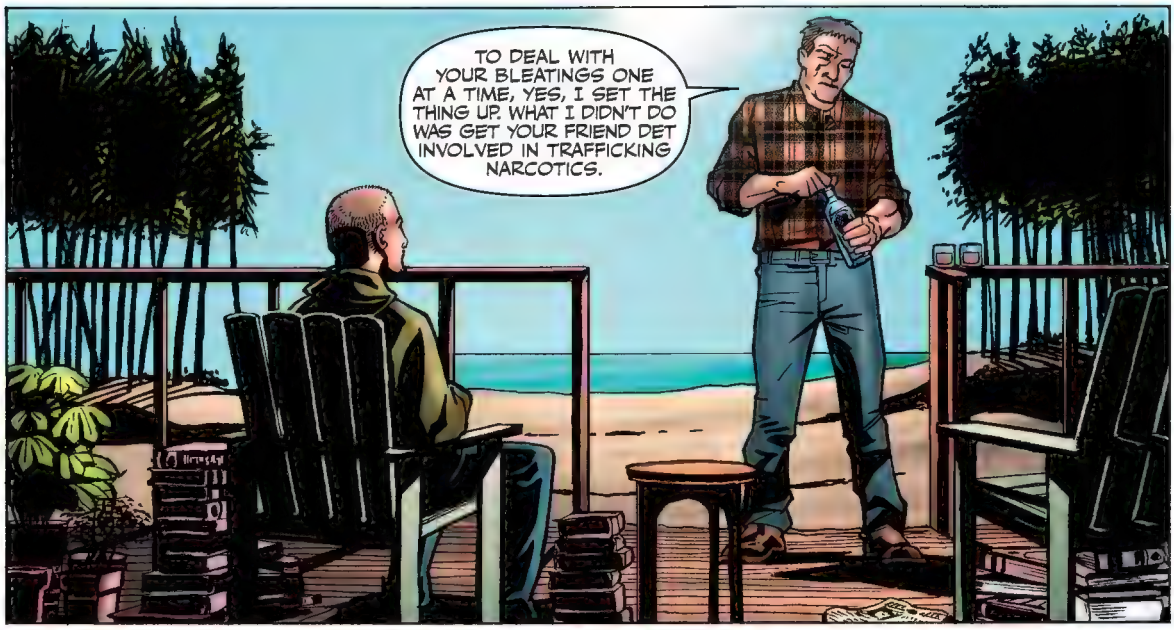
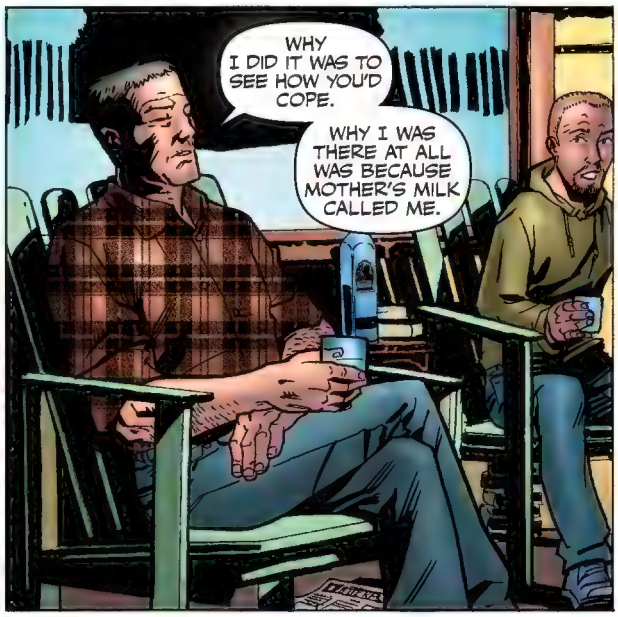
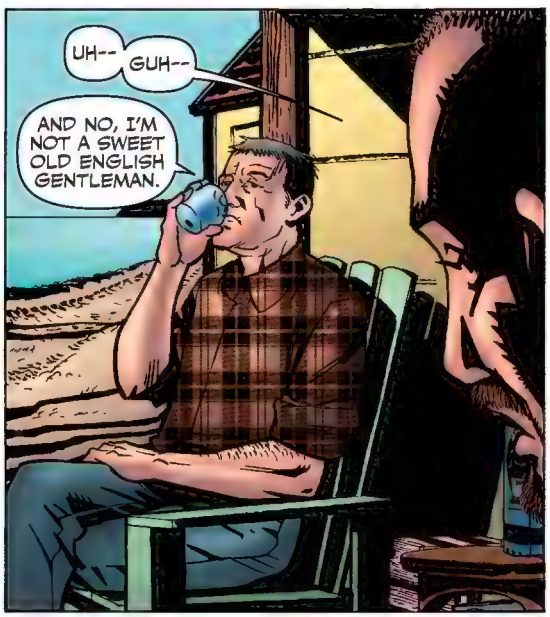


BARBARY COAST
part one


TO DEAL WITH YOUR BLEATINGS ONE AT A TIME, YES, I SET THE THING UP. WHAT I DIDN'T DO WAS GET YOUR FRIEND DET INVOLVED IN TRAFFICKING NARCOTICS.

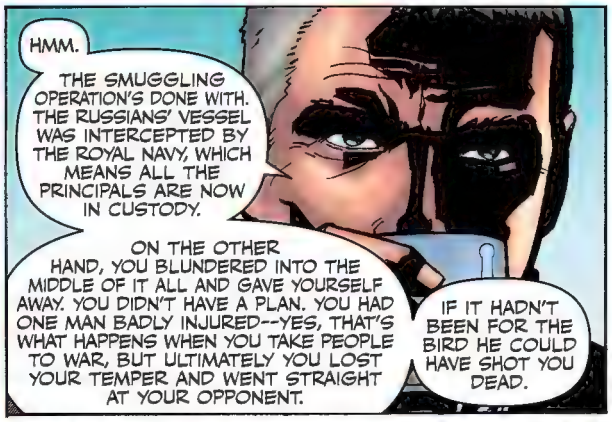
OR LEAD BIG BOBBY INTO THE MIDDLE OF IT ALL.


WHY I DID IT WAS TO SEE HOW YOU'D COPE.
WHY I WAS THERE AT ALL WAS BECAUSE MOTHER'S MILK CALLED ME.


UH-- GUH--
AND NO, I'M NOT A SWEET OLD ENGLISH GENTLEMAN.

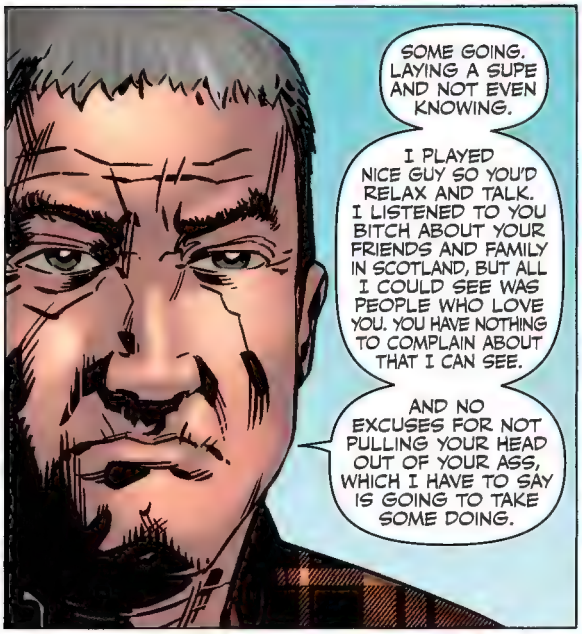
GREG MALLORY, LATE OF THE THIRD ARMORED.
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.

UM... WELL.
GOOD ACCENT.
I WORKED WITH A LOT OF YOUR INTELLIGENCE PEOPLE AFTER THE WAR. DID THEM BETTER THAN THEY DID ME.



I DON'T WANNA GET BETTER AT *KILLIN' FOLK...!*
YOU SHOULD AT LEAST TRY TO GET BETTER AT SOMETHING. HOW LONG WERE YOU SEEING THAT GIRL BEFORE YOU REALIZED WHO SHE WAS?

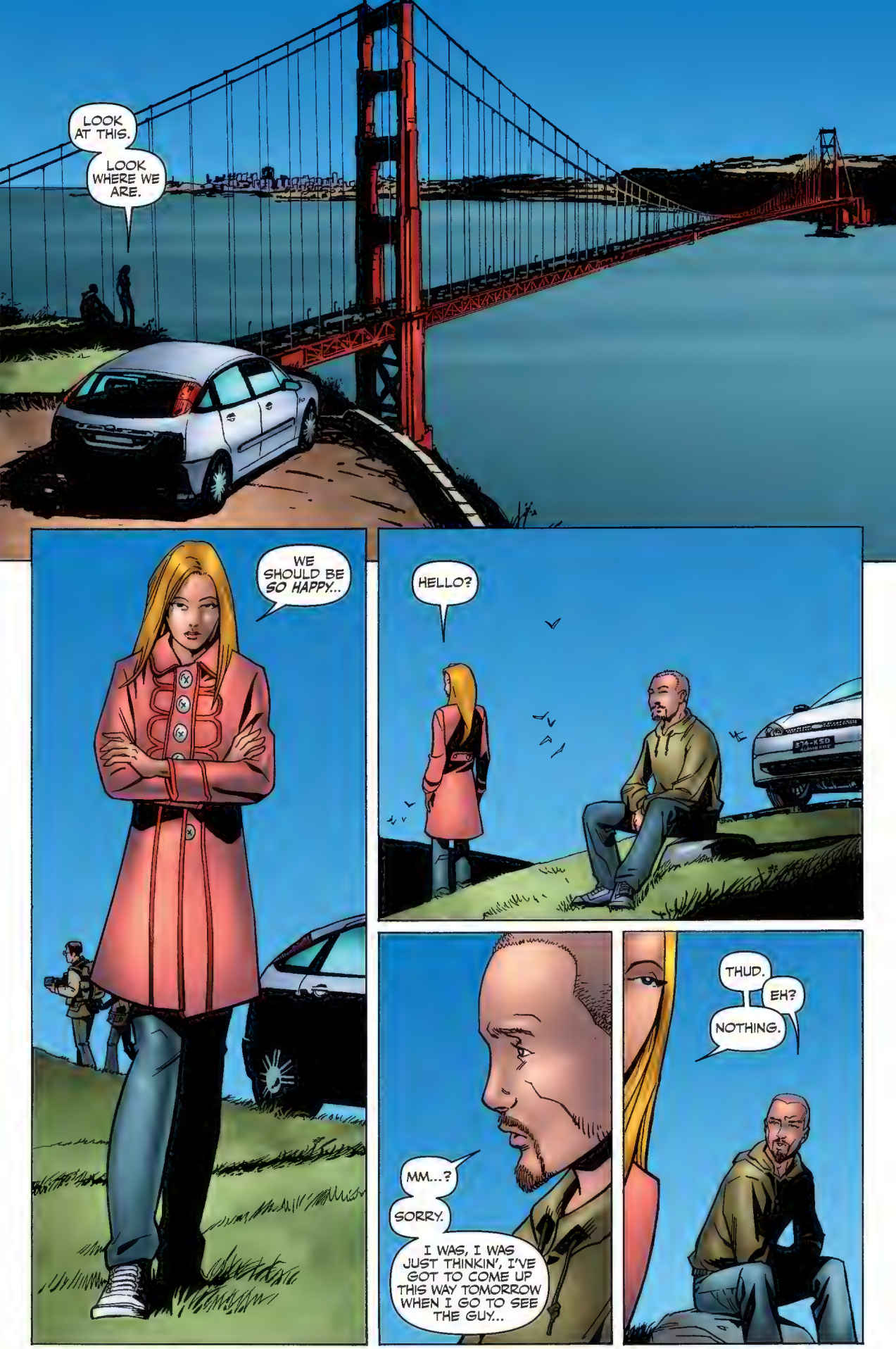
YOU KNEW?
RECOGNIZED HER RIGHT AWAY. I KEEP UP WITH THIS STUFF, EVEN IF I'M NOT INVOLVED ANYMORE.
M.M. TOLD ME YOU'D HAD A BAD BREAK-UP BEFORE YOU LEFT; ALL I DID WAS PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER.

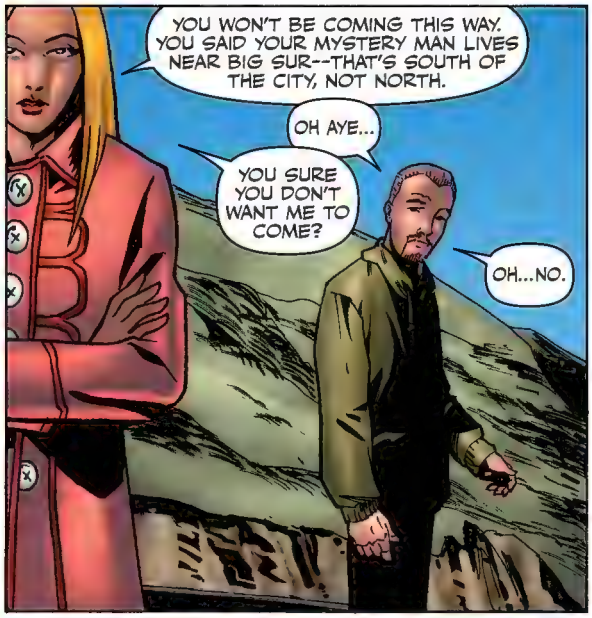

SOME GOING. LAYING A SUPE AND NOT EVEN KNOWING.
I PLAYED NICE GUY SO YOU'D RELAX AND TALK. I LISTENED TO YOU BITCH ABOUT YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN SCOTLAND, BUT ALL I COULD SEE WAS PEOPLE WHO LOVE YOU. YOU HAVE NOTHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THAT I CAN SEE.
AND NO EXCUSES FOR NOT PULLING YOUR HEAD OUT OF YOUR ASS, WHICH I HAVE TO SAY IS GOING TO TAKE SOME DOING.

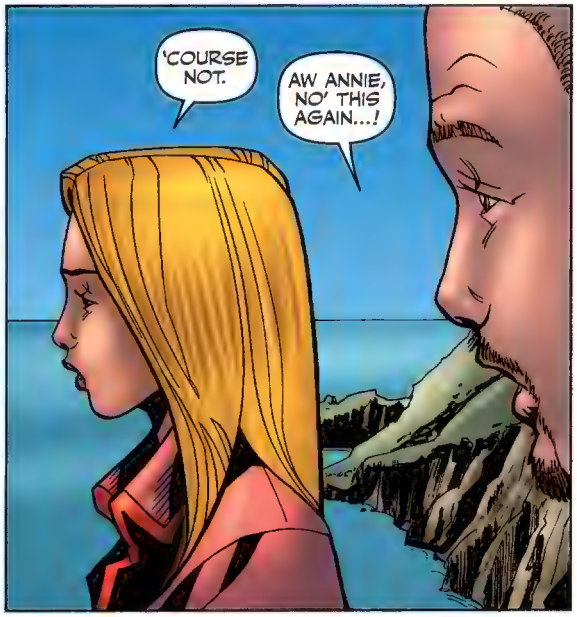
NO, NO, THE GIRL--IT'S NO' AS SIMPLE AS--
THERE'S THINGS HAPPENED WI' HER I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT, I WASN'T READY FOR ANY OF IT...
PUT UP OR SHUT UP.

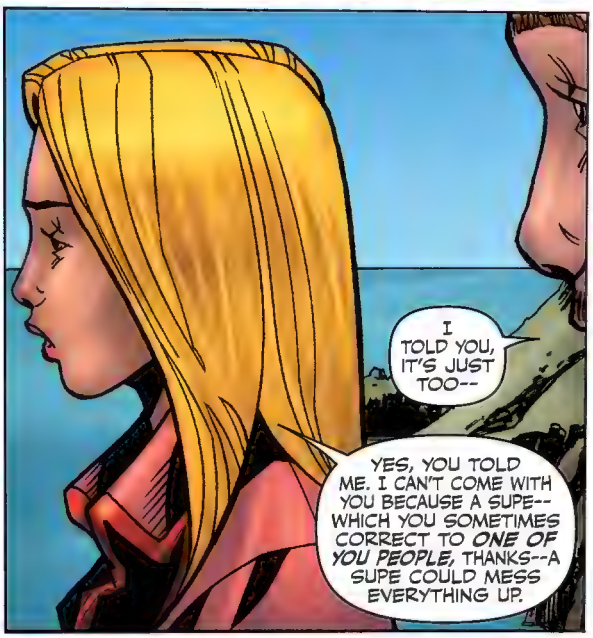
NO?
WHERE IS SHE, ANYWAY?

SHE'S...
I'M TRYNNA KEEP HER OUT O' THIS FOR NOW.

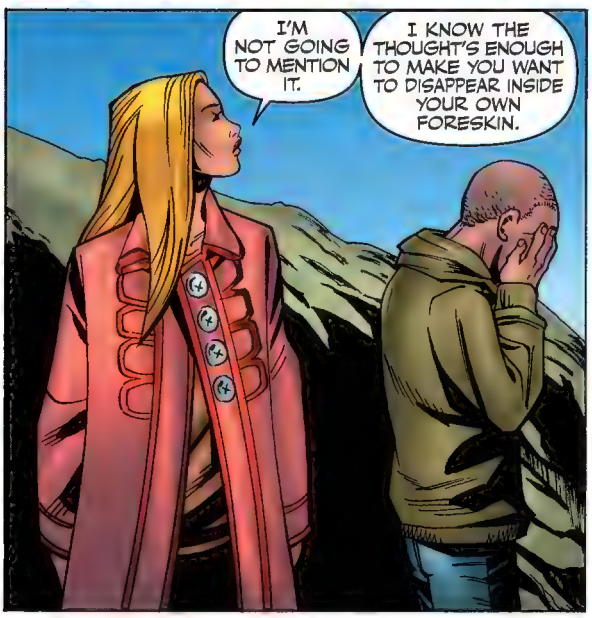

LOOK AT THIS.
LOOK WHERE WE ARE.
WE SHOULD BE SO HAPPY...
HELLO?
MM...?
SORRY.
I WAS, I WAS JUST THINKIN', I'VE GOT TO COME UP THIS WAY TOMORROW WHEN I GO TO SEE THE GUY...
THUD.
EH?
NOTHING.


YOU WON'T BE COMING THIS WAY. YOU SAID YOUR MYSTERY MAN LIVES NEAR BIG SUR--THAT'S SOUTH OF THE CITY, NOT NORTH.
OH AYE...
YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT ME TO COME?
OH...NO.


'COURSE NOT.
AW ANNIE, NO' THIS AGAIN...!


I TOLD YOU, IT'S JUST TOO--
YES, YOU TOLD ME. I CAN'T COME WITH YOU BECAUSE A SUPE--WHICH YOU SOMETIMES CORRECT TO ***ONE OF YOU PEOPLE,*** THANKS--A SUPE COULD MESS EVERYTHING UP.

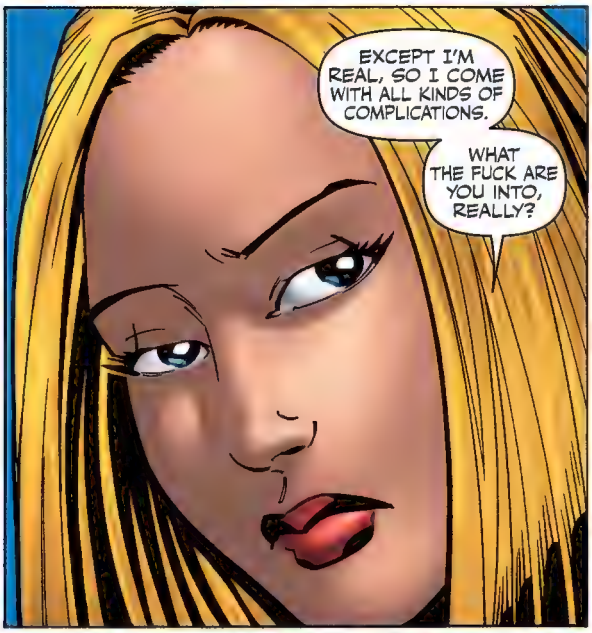
IN FACT, APPARENTLY I SHOULD GO AHEAD AND ***QUIT*** BEING A SUPE, BECAUSE NOT EVERYONE LOVES THEM AND THINGS MIGHT BE GETTING QUITE DANGEROUS FOR THEM SOON.
CAN'T YOU SEE HOW FRUSTRATING IT IS FOR ME? NOT JUST LITTLE HINTS LIKE THAT, THERE'S ALSO THE FACT THAT YOU SAW ***SECRET SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE FROM THE SEVEN'S H.Q.--***
DON'T.


I'M NOT GOING TO MENTION IT.
I KNOW THE THOUGHT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU WANT TO DISAPPEAR INSIDE YOUR OWN FORESKIN.

BUT CAN'T YOU SEE HOW OBVIOUS IT IS THAT YOU'RE JUST NOT WHO YOU SAY YOU ARE?

HMH.
THAT WAS LOVELY, THAT WAS. THAT THING ABOUT THE FORESKIN.
WELL, THAT'S ME, HUGHIE...

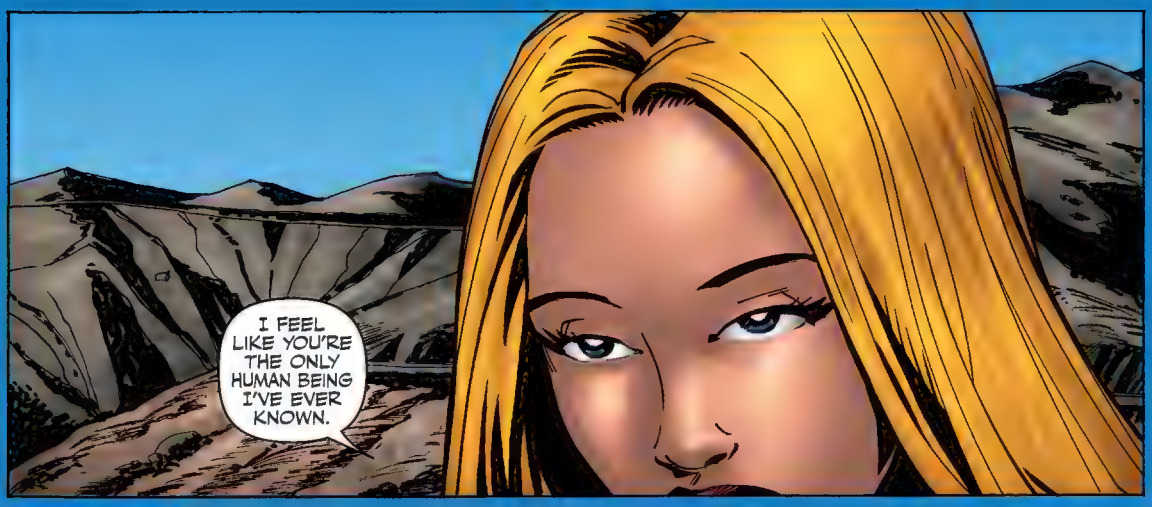
I'M THE PERFECT GIRL.
YOU READ ABOUT ME IN MAXIM OR WHATEVER. I TELL DIRTY JOKES LIKE I'M ONE OF THE GUYS, AND I'M SITTING THERE IN MY PANTIES AND BRA SO YOU CAN SEE I'M A PIECE OF ASS IN THE BARGAIN.


EXCEPT I'M REAL, SO I COME WITH ALL KINDS OF COMPLICATIONS.
WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU INTO, REALLY?

AW GOD, ANNIE...
YOU CAN'T TELL ME.

I KNOW.
YOU CAN'T TALK TO ME, YOU CAN'T RELAX WITH ME, YOU CAN BARELY EVEN BRING YOURSELF TO TOUCH ME.
AREN'T WE DOING WELL?

LOOK...I'M SO SORRY, I JUST...
I DUNNO HOW THIS CAN POSSIBLY TURN OUT WELL FOR US. I MEAN WE'VE BEEN OVER IT AGAIN AN' AGAIN AN' YOU'VE HEARD NOTHIN' THAT'S MADE YOU HAPPY, D'YOU NO' THINK YOU'VE PUT UP WITH ENOUGH?
D'YOU NO' THINK YOU'D BE BETTER... MAYBE...?
I CAN'T.

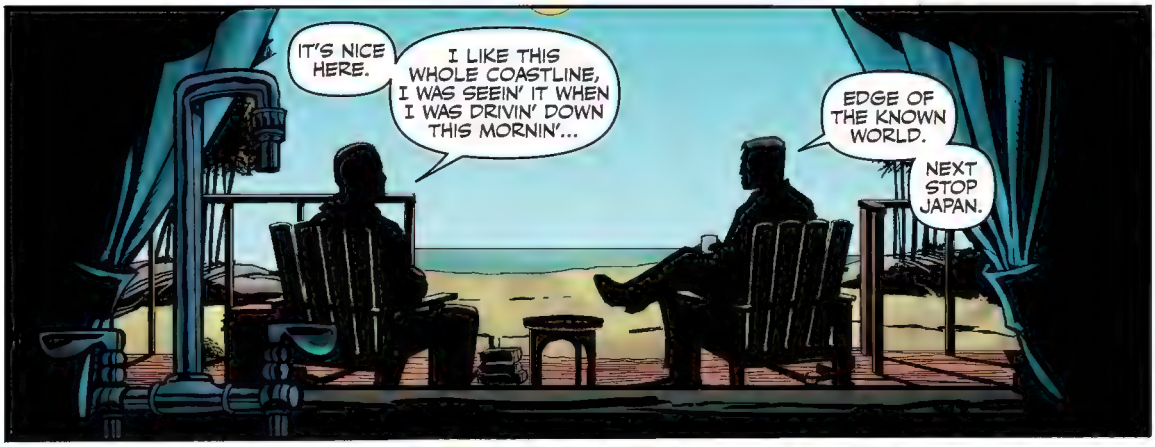

I FEEL LIKE YOU'RE THE ONLY HUMAN BEING I'VE EVER KNOWN.

I MEAN LOOK AT MY FOSTER-PARENTS. OR THE YOUNG AMERICANS. OR THE *SEVEN,* FOR CHRIST'S SAKE.
LOOK HOW THEY ALL TREATED ME, COMPARED TO WHAT YOU AND I HAD.
WHY WOULD I EVER WANT TO LET YOU GO?

I'M SORRY.
I HADN'T THOUGHT OF IT LIKE THAT.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP ON TELLING ME YOU'RE SORRY.
I KNOW I'M JUST A GIANT COMPLICATION IN YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW. BUT IF YOU COULD CARRY ON BEING SORT OF SEMI-NICE TO ME FOR A WHILE, I'D APPRECIATE IT.

I--
I READ ABOUT A CUBAN RESTAURANT UP ON THE HAIGHT. IT SOUNDED REALLY, REALLY GOOD.
IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE LEAVING IN THE MORNING, DO YOU THINK WE COULD GO THERE TONIGHT?

OCH, AYE, OF COURSE WE CAN.
THAT'D BE BRILLIANT, WOULDN'T IT?

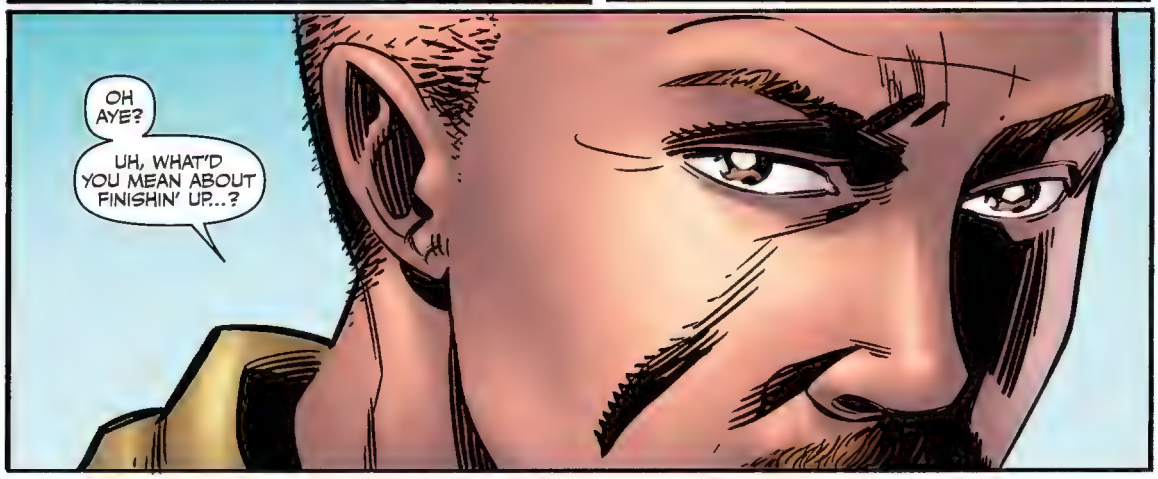

IT'S NICE HERE.
I LIKE THIS WHOLE COASTLINE, I WAS SEEIN' IT WHEN I WAS DRIVIN' DOWN THIS MORNIN'...
EDGE OF THE KNOWN WORLD.
NEXT STOP JAPAN.

ALWAYS LIKED THE IDEA OF MOVING OUT HERE. YOU CAN GO NO FURTHER, LIKE THE PIONEERS WITH THEIR WAGONS AND THEIR HORSES. THIS IS IT.
YOU'VE SEEN EVERYTHING THE COUNTRY HAS TO OFFER; THIS IS AS GOOD A PLACE TO FINISH UP AS ANY.

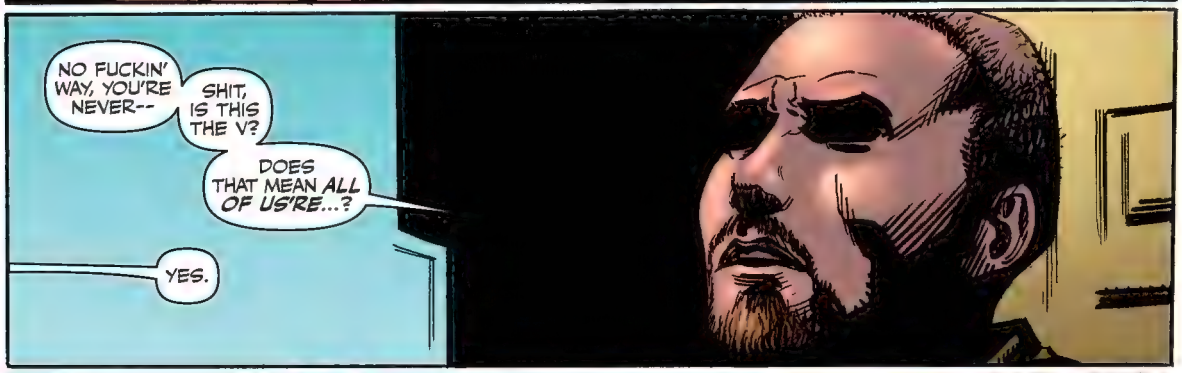
DID YOU NO' FANCY THE CITY, NO?
I'M DONE WITH CITIES.

THEY COMPLICATE AND COMPROMISE. INTRIGUE AGAINST YOU, EVEN. SOMETHING IN THEIR NATURE, THEIR HISTORY, IT MAKES YOU INTO LESS THAN WHAT YOU ARE.
SAN FRANCISCO WAS A CESSPOOL IN ITS TIME. A CENTURY AGO, LITTLE MORE, THERE WAS A STRETCH OF IT WHERE EVERY SON OF A BITCH IN ALL CREATION GATHERED.
THEY CAME IN OFF THE OCEAN, OR ACROSS THE LAND, AND THEY MADE THAT PLACE A WHORE TO RIVAL BABYLON...

BUT OUT HERE YOU LEAVE ALL THAT BEHIND.
YOU LOOK THE PAST IN THE EYE, AND YOU FEEL CLEAN.

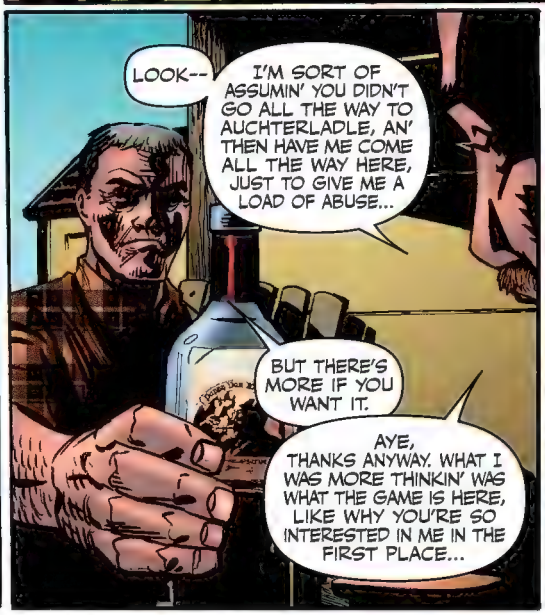

OH, AYE?
UH, WHAT'D YOU MEAN ABOUT FINISHIN' UP...?

I'M NINETY-ONE YEARS OLD.


NO FUCKIN' WAY, YOU'RE NEVER--
SHIT, IS THIS THE V?
DOES THAT MEAN *ALL OF US'RE*...?
YES.

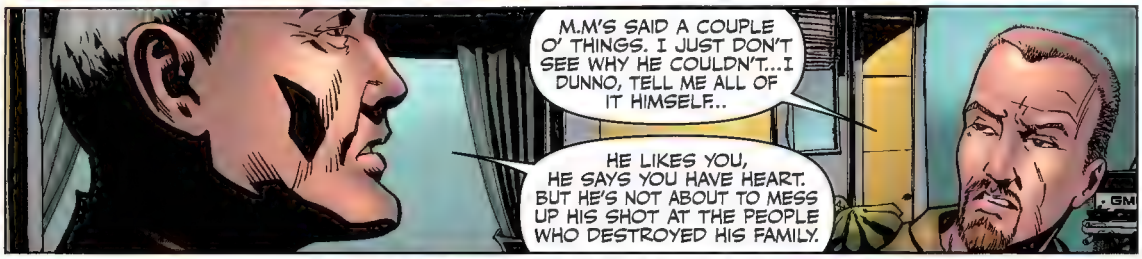
DON'T GET TOO EXCITED, IT'S NOT ETERNAL LIFE. FEELS MORE LIKE TAXIDERMY, IF THE TRUTH BE TOLD.
YOU'LL GET A FEW MORE YEARS THAN YOU MIGHT HAVE DONE, AND YOU WON'T LOOK YOUR AGE UNTIL THE END. YOU'LL ONLY FEEL IT.

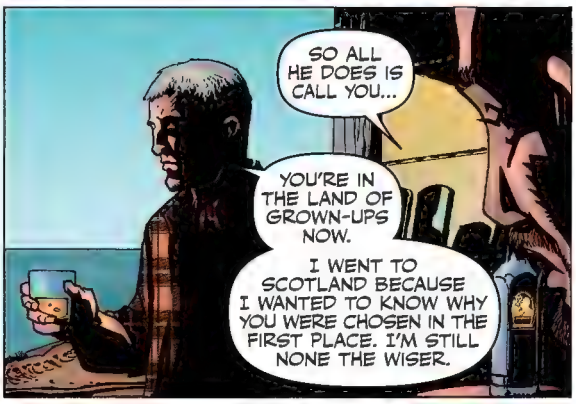
PICKLED, WAS THE WORD VOGELBAUM USED TO USE.
JINGS...

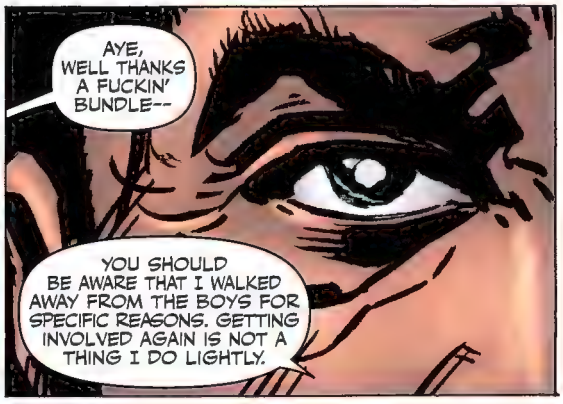

LOOK--
I'M SORT OF ASSUMIN' YOU DIDN'T GO ALL THE WAY TO AUCHTERLADLE, AN' THEN HAVE ME COME ALL THE WAY HERE, JUST TO GIVE ME A LOAD OF ABUSE...
BUT THERE'S MORE IF YOU WANT IT.
AYE, THANKS ANYWAY. WHAT I WAS MORE THINKIN' WAS WHAT THE GAME IS HERE, LIKE WHY YOU'RE SO INTERESTED IN ME IN THE FIRST PLACE...

BECAUSE OF THE NAME THAT HASN'T COME UP YET.

YOU'RE NOT AFRAID TO SAY IT, AM I RIGHT?
BUT YOU ARE AFRAID OF FACING WHAT MIGHT BE.

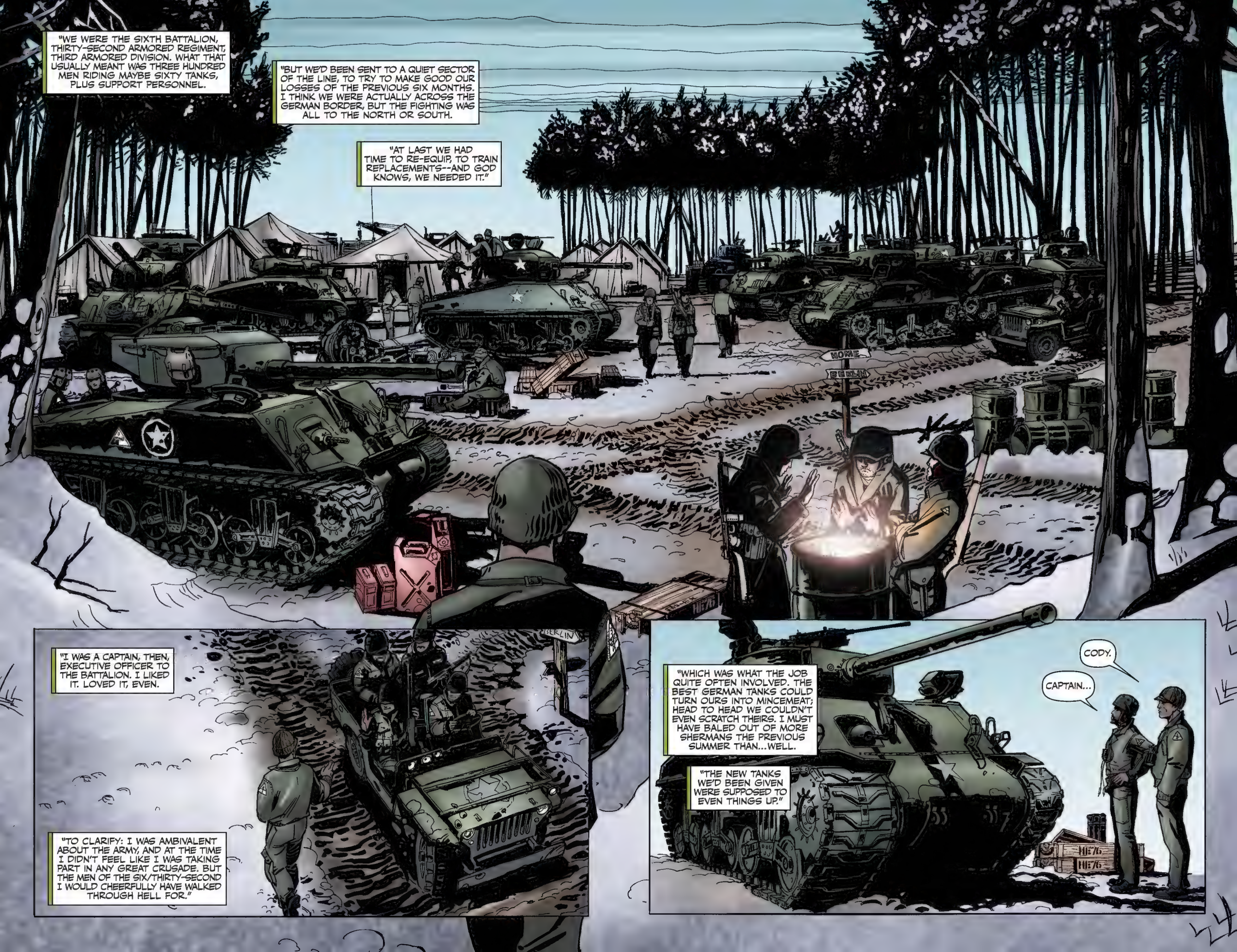

M.M'S SAID A COUPLE O' THINGS. I JUST DON'T SEE WHY HE COULDN'T...I DUNNO, TELL ME ALL OF IT HIMSELF...
HE LIKES YOU, HE SAYS YOU HAVE HEART. BUT HE'S NOT ABOUT TO MESS UP HIS SHOT AT THE PEOPLE WHO DESTROYED HIS FAMILY.


SO ALL HE DOES IS CALL YOU...
YOU'RE IN THE LAND OF GROWN-UPS NOW.
I WENT TO SCOTLAND BECAUSE I WANTED TO KNOW WHY YOU WERE CHOSEN IN THE FIRST PLACE. I'M STILL NONE THE WISER.


AYE, WELL THANKS A FUCKIN' BUNDLE--
YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT I WALKED AWAY FROM THE BOYS FOR SPECIFIC REASONS. GETTING INVOLVED AGAIN IS NOT A THING I DO LIGHTLY.

"BUT...YOU SEE HOW WE'RE ALREADY AVOIDING THE SUBJECT?"

"IT WAS THE LAST WINTER OF THE WAR."
"I REMEMBER HOW CRISP IT WAS THAT MORNING. THE SKY WAS OVERCAST, BUT FLAWLESS.
"IT WAS COLD AND IT WAS STILL AND IT WOULDN'T BE LONG BEFORE IT SNOWED AGAIN."


"WE WERE THE SIXTH BATTALION, THIRTY-SECOND ARMORED REGIMENT, THIRD ARMORED DIVISION. WHAT THAT USUALLY MEANT WAS THREE HUNDRED MEN RIDING MAYBE SIXTY TANKS, PLUS SUPPORT PERSONNEL.
"BUT WE'D BEEN SENT TO A QUIET SECTOR OF THE LINE, TO TRY TO MAKE GOOD OUR LOSSES OF THE PREVIOUS SIX MONTHS. I THINK WE WERE ACTUALLY ACROSS THE GERMAN BORDER, BUT THE FIGHTING WAS ALL TO THE NORTH OR SOUTH.
"AT LAST WE HAD TIME TO RE-EQUIP, TO TRAIN REPLACEMENTS--AND GOD KNOWS, WE NEEDED IT."
HOME
BERLIN
"I WAS A CAPTAIN, THEN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO THE BATTALION. I LIKED IT. LOVED IT, EVEN.
"TO CLARIFY: I WAS AMBIVALENT ABOUT THE ARMY, AND AT THE TIME I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE I WAS TAKING PART IN ANY GREAT CRUSADE. BUT THE MEN OF THE SIX/THIRTY-SECOND I WOULD CHEERFULLY HAVE WALKED THROUGH HELL FOR."
"WHICH WAS WHAT THE JOB QUITE OFTEN INVOLVED. THE BEST GERMAN TANKS COULD TURN OURS INTO MINCEMEAT; HEAD TO HEAD WE COULDN'T EVEN SCRATCH THEIRS. I MUST HAVE BALED OUT OF MORE SHERMANS THE PREVIOUS SUMMER THAN...WELL.
"THE NEW TANKS WE'D BEEN GIVEN WERE SUPPOSED TO EVEN THINGS UP."
CODY.
CAPTAIN...

WHAT'S THE VERDICT?
SAME TANK, NEW GUN.
OPTICS SEEM OKAY. WON'T KNOW FOR SURE 'TIL WE MARK OUT A RANGE AND START BORESIGHTING.

GOOD ARMOR PENETRATION?
BOOK SAYS SO. BUT IT HAS A SHITTY HIGH EXPLOSIVE SHELL, ONLY ABOUT HALF THE BANG OF THE OLD ONE.
DOESN'T FIRE WHITE PHOSPHOROUS AT ALL.

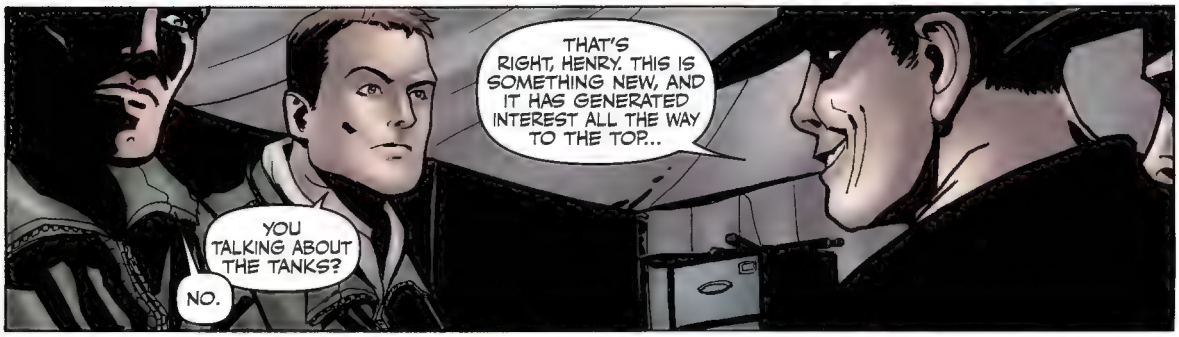
HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO MARK TARGETS?
OR FRY NESTS OF KRAUTS ALIVE. I DON'T KNOW.
WE USE THAT STUFF FOR EVERYTHING, WHAT THE HELL WERE THEY THINKING...?

CAPTAIN MALLORY, THE COLONEL WANTS TO SEE YOU, SIR.
RIGHT.
IT WAS DESIGNED AS A TANK KILLER, I GUESS YOU CAN'T HAVE IT ALL...
GERMANS SEEM TO.

MM.
WHY DOES NO ONE EVER ASK US ABOUT THIS STUFF?

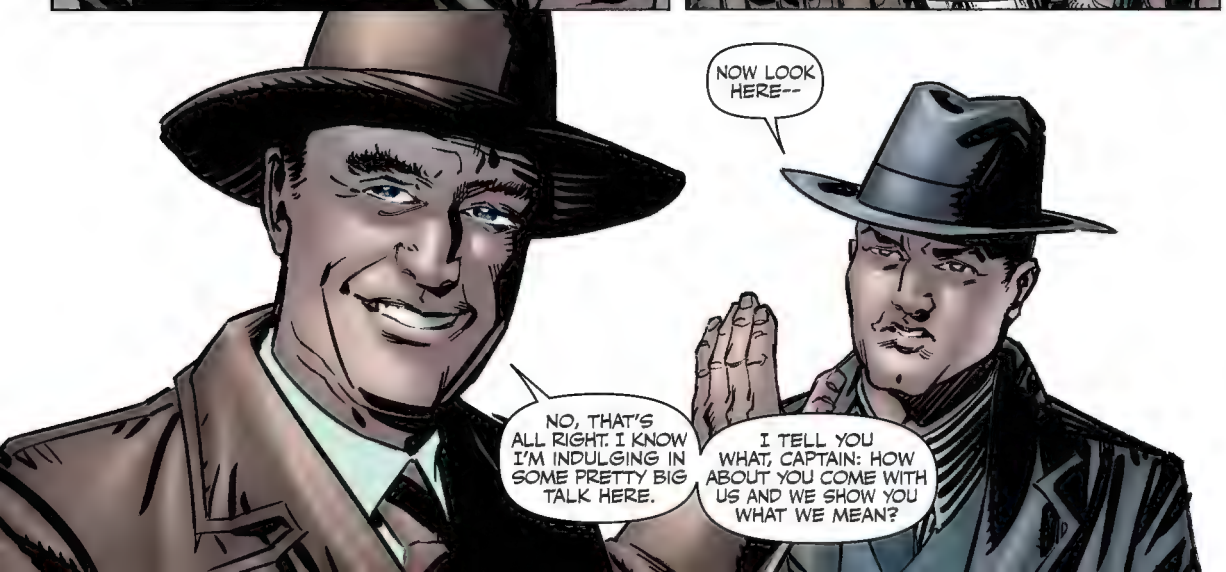
"I REMEMBER THE COLONEL AS A LION IN COMBAT AND A PUSSY IN ALL OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES. I'D SEEN HIM LEAD CHARGES INTO THE MOUTHS OF GERMAN GUNS AND PULL INJURED MEN OUT OF BURNING TANKS--THEN BEND OVER FOR WHATEVER GENERAL HAPPENED ALONG WITH THE LATEST SUICIDAL ATTACK PLAN.
"HE'D FIGHT THE ENEMY. HE JUST WOULDN'T FIGHT FOR US."
'MORNING, GREG. LIKE SOME COFFEE?
THANK YOU, COLONEL.
BE RIGHT BACK WITH IT, SIR.
GREG, WE HAVE A COUPLE OF VISITORS FROM BACK HOME...
THIS IS, AH, SENATOR BUSH--
PRESCOTT SHELDON BUSH OF CONNECTICUT. GLAD TO MAKE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE.
AND THIS IS MISTER HENRY NEWMAN...
NEUMAN. HENRY K. NEUMAN, VOUGHT AMERICAN CONSOLIDATED.
V.A.C....YOU THE PEOPLE USED TO MAKE OUR BOOTS?
THAT IS CORRECT.
UH-HUH.

WELL, WE ARE HERE WITH SOMETHING A LOT MORE INTERESTING THAN BOOTS TODAY, YOUNG FELLOW...!
HERE BY PERSONAL INVITATION OF GENERAL EISENHOWER, I MIGHT ADD.


THAT'S RIGHT, HENRY. THIS IS SOMETHING NEW, AND IT HAS GENERATED INTEREST ALL THE WAY TO THE TOP...
YOU TALKING ABOUT THE TANKS?
NO.

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT SOLDIERS, CAPTAIN MALLORY. VERY SPECIAL SOLDIERS, WHO ARE TO BE ATTACHED TO YOUR UNIT FOR COMBAT TRIALS.
THEY ARE GOING TO REVOLUTIONIZE THE WAY THIS WAR IS FOUGHT; I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT NOTHING IS EVER GOING TO BE THE SAME AGAIN...

OKAY.
HEH! YOU CERTAINLY TAKE THINGS IN YOUR STRIDE, DON'T YOU, SON?
YOU LEARN TO. MY WAR STARTED IN THE NORMANDY BOCAGE LAST JULY; SINCE THEN I DON'T THINK I'VE HEARD A SINGLE PROMISE THAT ACTUALLY CAME TRUE.


NOW LOOK HERE--
NO, THAT'S ALL RIGHT. I KNOW I'M INDULGING IN SOME PRETTY BIG TALK HERE.
I TELL YOU WHAT, CAPTAIN: HOW ABOUT YOU COME WITH US AND WE SHOW YOU WHAT WE MEAN?

I'M GUESSING MISTER NEUMAN'S COMPANY IS BEHIND THESE MIRACLE MEN. I'M JUST WONDERING WHERE A UNITED STATES SENATOR FITS IN THE PICTURE?
WELL, YOU MIGHT SAY I'M MISTER NEUMAN'S CHAMPION ON CAPITOL HILL. NOT EVERYONE LOOKS TO THE FUTURE THE WAY WE DO; IT CAN TAKE SOME PRETTY HEFTY POLITICAL MUSCLE TO GET THINGS PAST THE STICK-IN-THE-MUDS...
WE TAKE THIS WAR PRETTY DARN SERIOUSLY IN WASHINGTON, YOU KNOW. WE AREN'T BLIND TO WHAT YOU BOYS ARE GOING THROUGH-- WHY, MY OWN BOY IS CURRENTLY SERVING IN THE PACIFIC THEATRE.
HERE WE ARE.
HERE?
CAN'T BE TOO MANY OF THEM IF THEY ALL FIT IN THE ONE TENT...
WE DON'T NEED TOO MANY OF THEM, CAPTAIN.
YOU'LL SEE.

...IS THIS A JOKE?
WAIT A MINUTE, THE LEGEND SAID SOMETHIN' ABOUT THIS. HE TOLD ME VOUGHT HAD A GO AT USIN' SUPES IN THE WAR, IS THAT WHAT THIS IS?
THEY COULDN'T HAVE PICKED A WORSE TIME FOR IT IF THEY'D TRIED.
I SAID IT WAS A QUIET SECTOR. AND IT HAD BEEN. FORESTS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE BAD TANK COUNTRY TO BEGIN WITH, AND THE GERMANS WERE GENERALLY RECKONED TO BE EXHAUSTED: NO ONE WAS EXPECTING TROUBLE IN THE ARDENNES THAT WINTER.
BUT ALL THAT MEANS IS THAT WE'D FORGOTTEN WHO WE WERE UP AGAINST. AND THEY WERE JUST ABOUT TO REMIND US.
BECAUSE IT WAS THE SIXTEENTH OF DECEMBER, NINETEEN FORTY-FOUR...
THE START OF OPERATION *AUTUMN MIST*...

"THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE WAS ON ITS WAY."
next: THE BITTER WOODS

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In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

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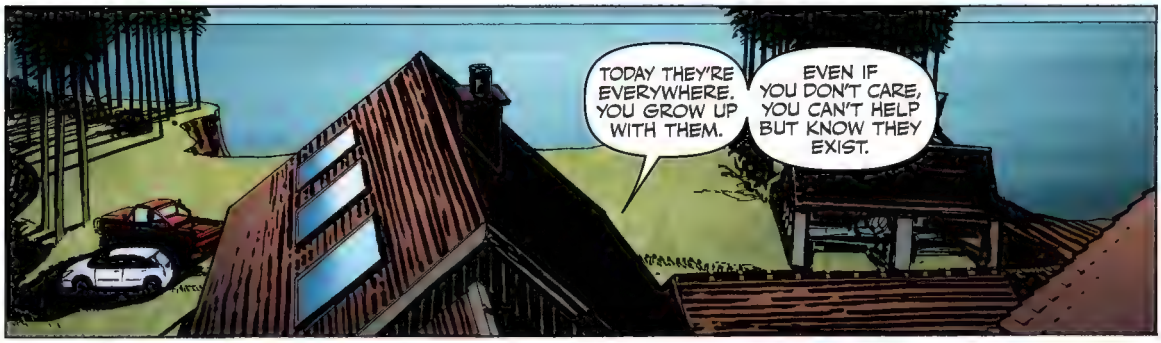
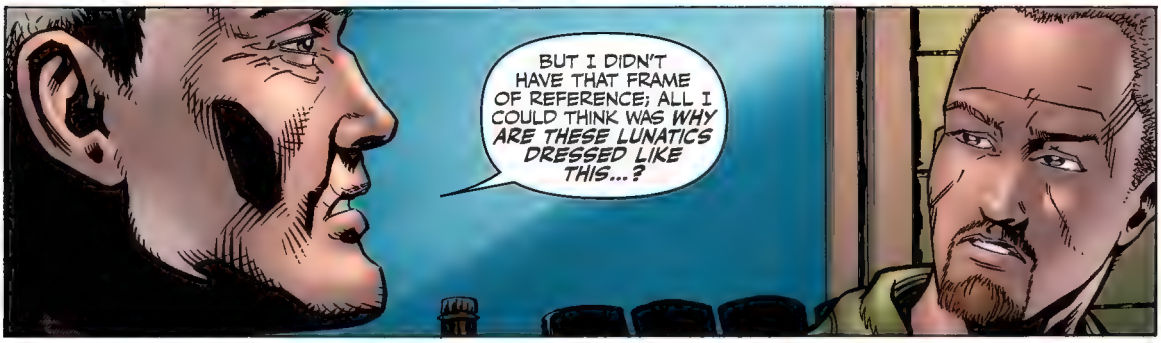
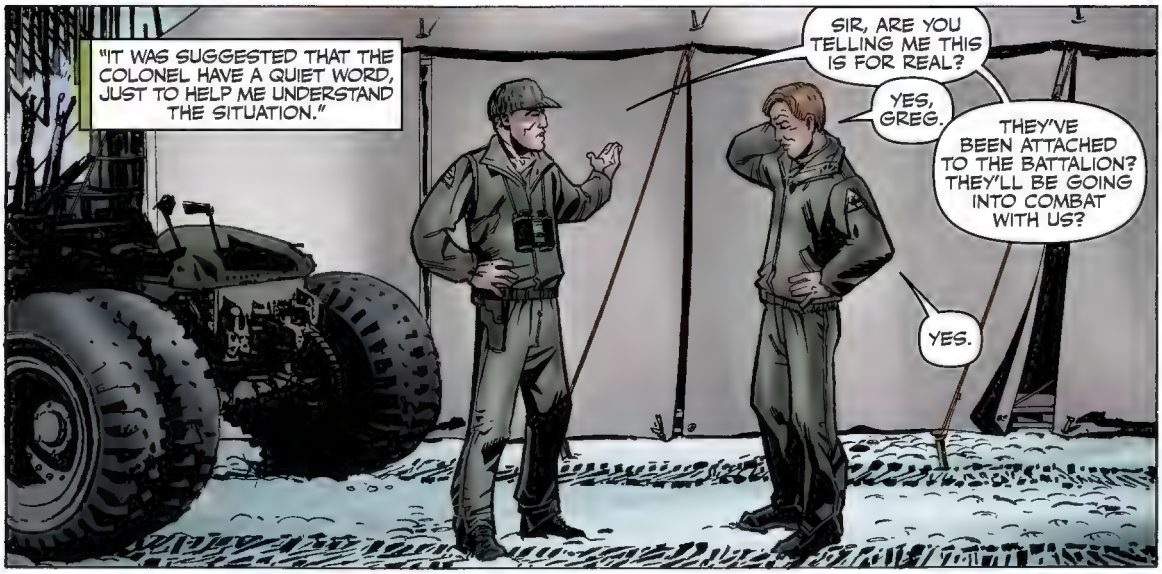
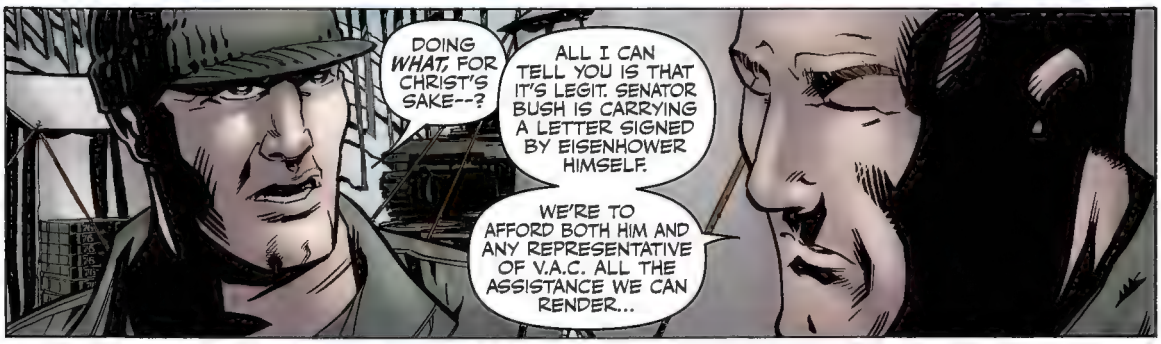

TODAY THEY'RE EVERYWHERE. YOU GROW UP WITH THEM.
EVEN IF YOU DON'T CARE, YOU CAN'T HELP BUT KNOW THEY EXIST.


BUT I DIDN'T HAVE THAT FRAME OF REFERENCE; ALL I COULD THINK WAS *WHY ARE THESE LUNATICS DRESSED LIKE THIS...?*


"IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT THE COLONEL HAVE A QUIET WORD, JUST TO HELP ME UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION."
SIR, ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS IS FOR REAL?
YES, GREG.
THEY'VE BEEN ATTACHED TO THE BATTALION? THEY'LL BE GOING INTO COMBAT WITH US?
YES.


DOING *WHAT,* FOR CHRIST'S SAKE--?
ALL I CAN TELL YOU IS THAT IT'S LEGIT. SENATOR BUSH IS CARRYING A LETTER SIGNED BY EISENHOWER HIMSELF.
WE'RE TO AFFORD BOTH HIM AND ANY REPRESENTATIVE OF V.A.C. ALL THE ASSISTANCE WE CAN RENDER...

IKE PLANNING A MOVE INTO POLITICS, IS HE...?
I HAVE MY ORDERS, GREG.
I'M SORRY.
USA

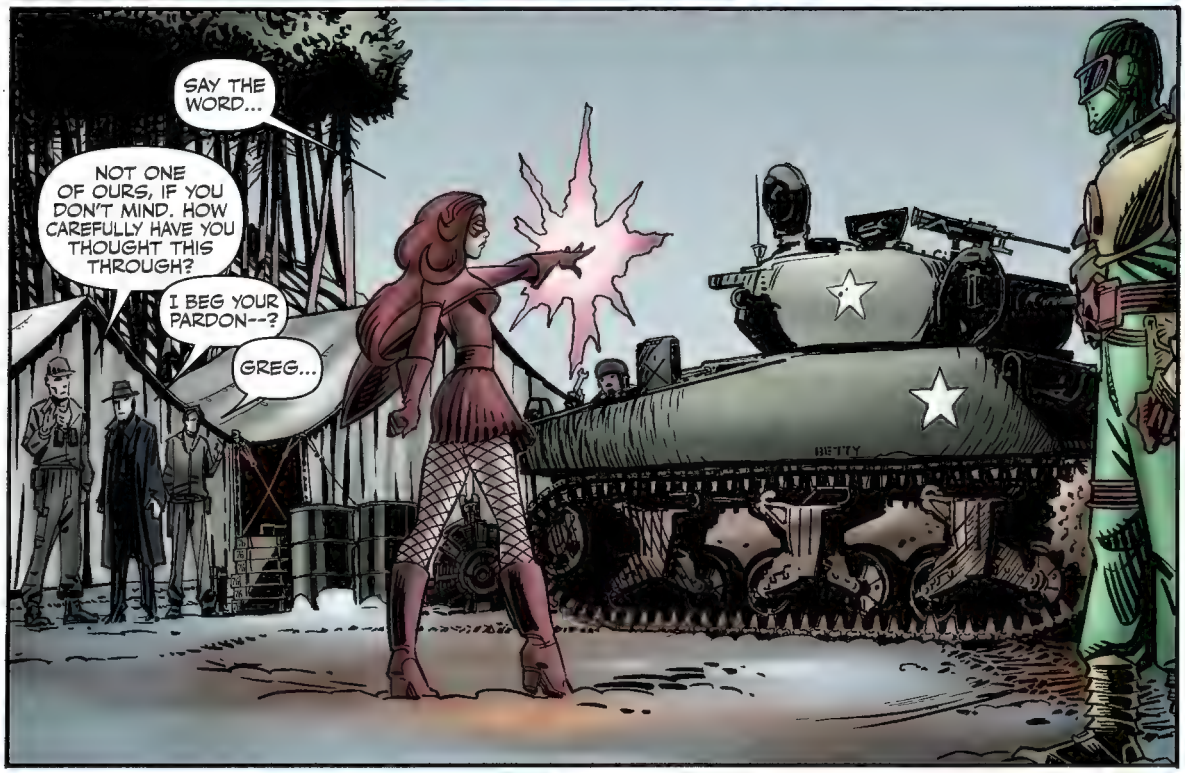
SOLDIER BOY AND THE AVENGING SQUAD REPORTING FOR DUTY, SIR!
YOU KEEP DOING THAT OUTDOORS, YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE ME SNIPER MEAT.
BARBARY COAST
part two

UH...?
OFFICERS GET SALUTED: OFFICERS GET SHOT.
"AVENGING SQUAD"?
THAT ISN'T FINAL. THE THEME WILL EITHER BE REVENGE OR JUSTICE, WE'RE STILL TRYING TO DECIDE.
WE BEING THE BOYS AT V.A.C.
CORRECT.
YOU'RE LOOKING AT THE RESULTS OF FIVE YEARS' WORK BY OUR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT'S MOST BRILLIANT MINDS. HUMAN BEINGS ADAPTED BY SCIENCE--TO BE STRONGER, SMARTER AND FASTER THAN ANY OTHER SOLDIER ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
THIS IS THE FUTURE, CAPTAIN MALLORY. YOU WOULD DO WELL TO EMBRACE IT.
SO THIS IS THEIR FIRST GO AT V...
MORE OR LESS. VOGELBAUM CAME OUT OF GERMANY IN 'THIRTY-EIGHT, HE'D ALREADY BEEN WORKING ON IT FOR A WHILE.
WELL HERE'S WHAT I'M EMBRACING RIGHT NOW, MISTER NEUMAN: SIXTH BATTALION IS SERIOUSLY UNDER STRENGTH IN PERSONNEL AND STANDS AT BARELY ONE THIRD ITS REGULAR COMPLEMENT OF TANKS. WHAT WE DO HAVE ARE NEW AND UNFAMILIAR; WE HAVEN'T EVEN STARTED WORKING OUT THE BUGS IN THEM.
CAN YOU EXPLAIN TO ME HOW THE FUTURE'S GOING TO HELP WITH ANY OF THAT?

HNNNHHRRRRNNNNHHHH
NNNAAAAAAAARRRRRHHHH
GO ON, STEEL KNIGHT!
SO...THEY CAN...?
LIFT IT. FLIP IT OVER, IF THEY SO CHOOSE.
WHUFF!!
BABY BELL

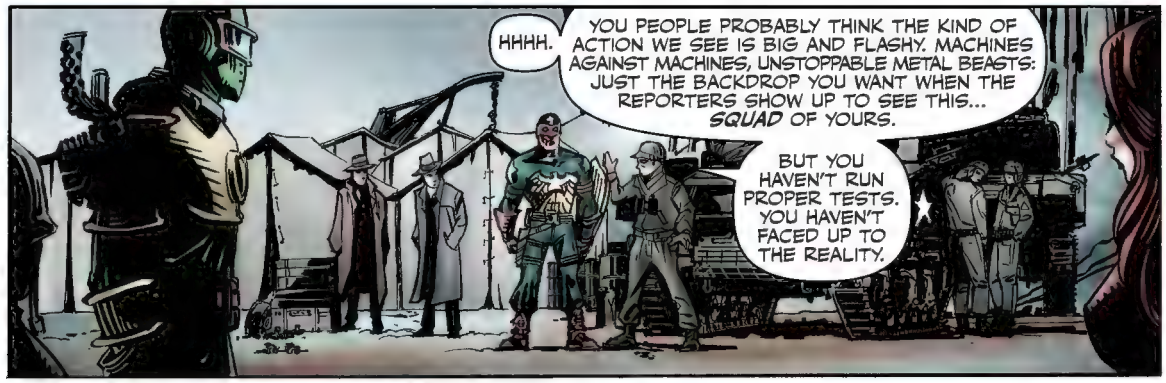
TH-TH-THANKS, LADDIO--!
YOU BETCHA, PARTNER!
IS THAT IT?
FOR NOW.

I'M NOT SAYING THAT MEN LIFTING A THIRTY-SIX TON SHERMAN A FOOT OFF THE GROUND IS SOMETHING YOU SEE EVERY DAY, BUT SOME OF THE GERMAN TANKS WEIGH ALMOST TWICE THAT. AND THEY WILL BE SHOOTING AT YOU AT THE TIME, DON'T FORGET.
LET THEM. THE CRIMSON COUNTESS CAN MELT TANKS WITH HER POWER BLASTS.


SAY THE WORD...
NOT ONE OF OURS, IF YOU DON'T MIND. HOW CAREFULLY HAVE YOU THOUGHT THIS THROUGH?
I BEG YOUR PARDON--?
GREG...
BETTY

LOOK-- I'M NOT SAYING--
HEY! SKIPPER! WHO ARE YOUR NEW BUDDIES?

YOUR CREW LIKELY TO PASS MUSTER AT THE NEXT INSPECTION, SERGEANT?!


HHHH.
YOU PEOPLE PROBABLY THINK THE KIND OF ACTION WE SEE IS BIG AND FLASHY. MACHINES AGAINST MACHINES, UNSTOPPABLE METAL BEASTS: JUST THE BACKDROP YOU WANT WHEN THE REPORTERS SHOW UP TO SEE THIS... *SQUAD* OF YOURS.
BUT YOU HAVEN'T RUN PROPER TESTS. YOU HAVEN'T FACED UP TO THE REALITY.

NOW, CAPTAIN MALLORY...!
AND THE REALITY *IS,* SENATOR, THAT YOU ARE DANGEROUSLY OUT OF YOUR DEPTH. BEFORE WE TAKE NEW WEAPONS INTO BATTLE WE TEST THEM AND TRAIN WITH THEM AS THOROUGHLY AS WE CAN, BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO BE DEPENDING ON THEM FOR OUR LIVES.
AND LIKE I SAID, WE ARE UNDER STRENGTH AND IN NO SHAPE TO FACE KRAUT IRON--AND NOW YOU EXPECT US TO SOMEHOW COPE WITH *THIS?*

BUT THAT'S WHY THE SQUAD ARE HERE, SO THEY CAN TRAIN WITH YOU. ISN'T THIS A QUIET PART OF THE LINE?
IT'S STILL THE LINE, WE'RE STILL INSIDE GERMANY. NO ONE WHO HASN'T SEEN COMBAT HAS ANY BUSINESS BEING HERE AT ALL.
IRON...?

ARMOR.
WHAT, YOU MEAN LIKE A SUIT OF ARMOR, LIKE A KNIGHT?

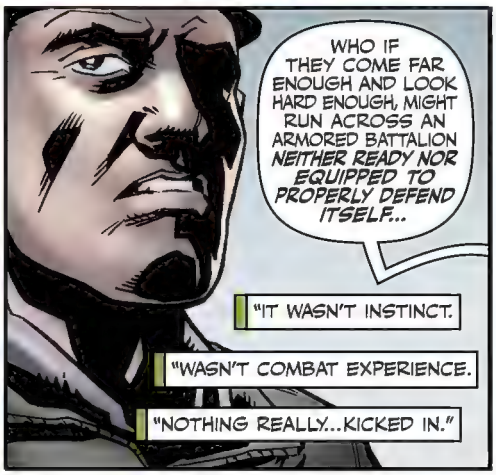
TANKS, YOU--
OH! OH, WELL, THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT! THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THAT IN THIS AREA, WE ALREADY CHECKED IT OUT!

COME AGAIN?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU CHECKED IT OUT...?
YES, AS SOON AS WE ARRIVED!

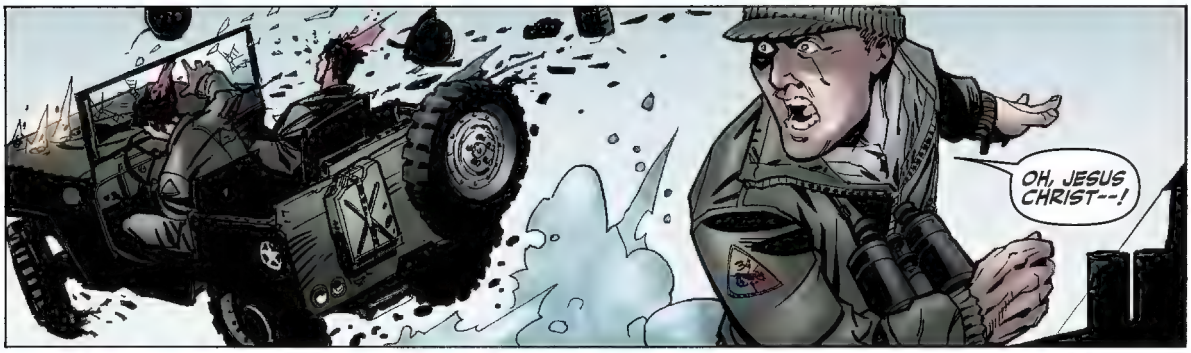
I WANTED TO BE CERTAIN EVERYTHING WAS SECURE, SO I HAD MANBOT, THE BUZZER AND EAGLE THE ARCHER GO UP AND TAKE A LOOK! THE WEATHER MIGHT BE KEEPING OUR PLANES OUT OF ACTION--BUT IT CAN'T STOP *THE AVENGING SQUAD!*
THESE BOYS CAN FLY RIGHT DOWN LOW, NO ONE'S GOING TO GET PAST THEM. AND I'M HAPPY TO REPORT THEY DIDN'T SEE A SINGLE THING...

THEY CAN *FLY*--?
WAIT A MINUTE, ON WHOSE AUTHORITY DID YOU ORDER A RECONNAISSANCE MISSION?
I'M SOLDIER BOY!

YOU DIDN'T THINK TO ASK ANYONE?
WHY... UM...?
HEY, COLONEL--
BECAUSE ANYONE SEEING *FLYING MEN* MIGHT GET A LITTLE SUSPICIOUS. MIGHT SEND OUT SCOUTS IN THEIR LAST NOTED DIRECTION.

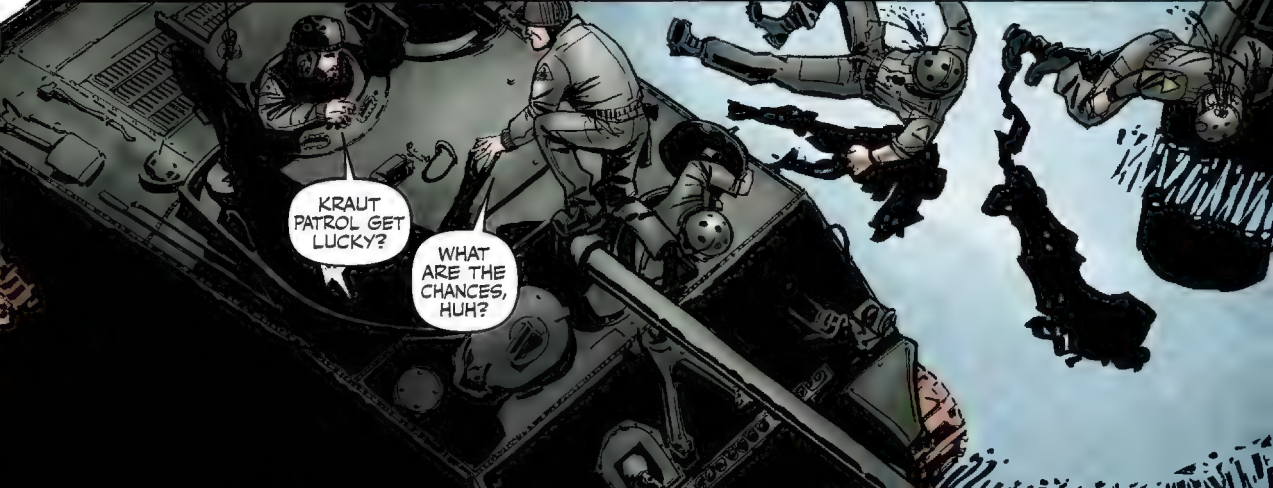

WHO IF THEY COME FAR ENOUGH AND LOOK HARD ENOUGH, MIGHT RUN ACROSS AN ARMORED BATTALION *NEITHER READY NOR EQUIPPED TO PROPERLY DEFEND ITSELF...*
"IT WASN'T INSTINCT.
"WASN'T COMBAT EXPERIENCE.
"NOTHING REALLY...KICKED IN."

IT WAS JUST A JUMBLE OF THOUGHTS IN MY HEAD: WELL, WE HAVEN'T SEEN A GERMAN IN WEEKS, THEN AGAIN, BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY, JESUS, I'M GOING TO BE EATING A TON OF SHIT IF THIS TURNS OUT TO BE NOTHING...
BUT FIRST I WAS WALKING. THEN I WAS RUNNING.
THEN I LET MY FEET TAKE OVER, AND I WAS FLAT-OUT SPRINTING.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU COULD HAVE BROUGHT DOWN ON US, SENATOR? YOU TOLD ME YOUR PEOPLE WOULD BE UNDER MY COMMAND--
AND THEY ARE, COLONEL, I ASSURE YOU THEY ARE...
THEY DIDN'T SEE ANYONE--!
CAPTAIN MALLORY?
MOUNT UP! START UP!
SKIPPER--?
MOUNT UP! START UP!
CODY, MOUNT UP! GET HER ROLLING!


OH, JESUS CHRIST--!

NO!!

WHAT'S--
GERMANS!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING? MOVE!


KRAUT PATROL GET LUCKY?
WHAT ARE THE CHANCES, HUH?

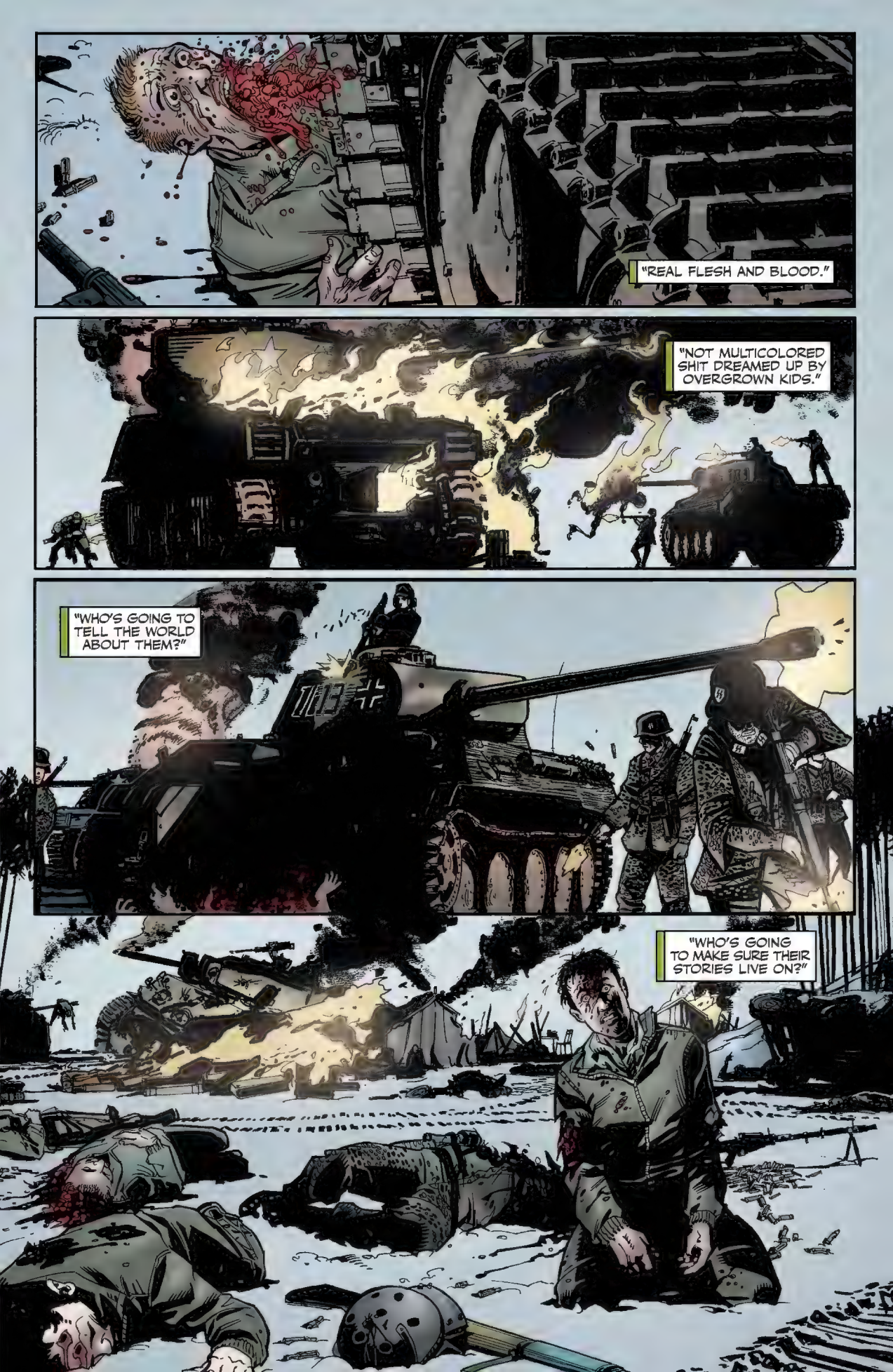
NAAAAAHH--!
EEEEEIIIIIIGGGHHH!!

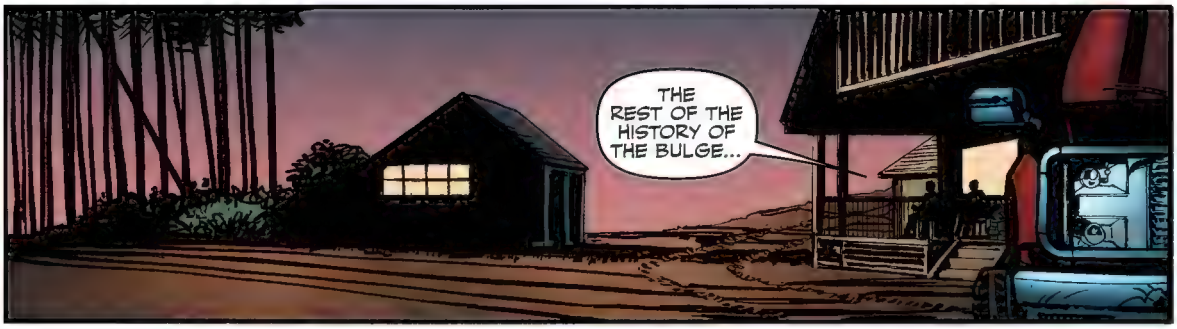
HOLD YOUR FIRE 'TIL YOU HAVE A TARGET! WATCH OUT FOR OUR GUYS!
GOTTA GET ABOVE IT!
GOTTA FLY!

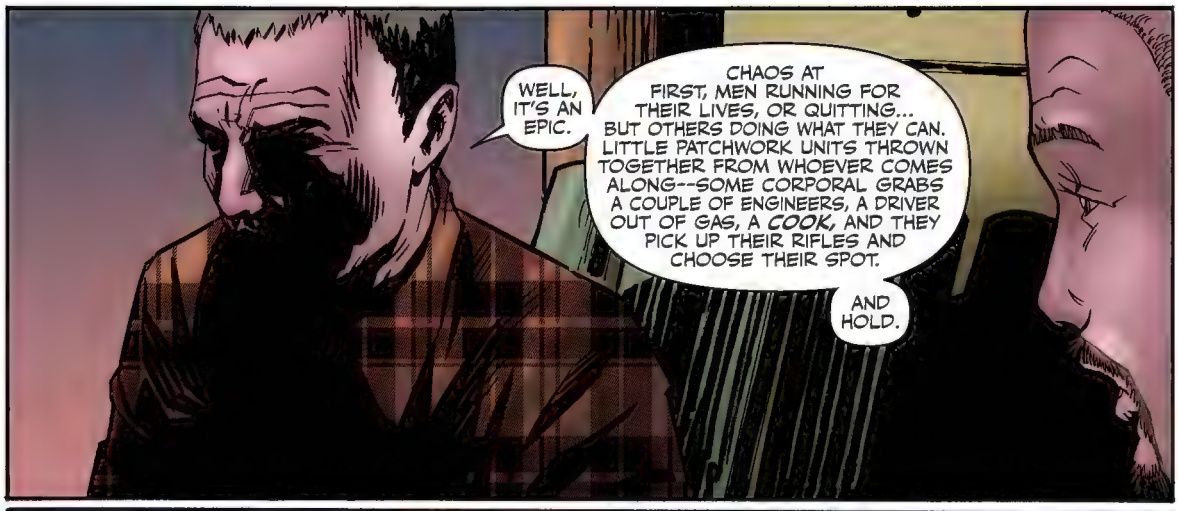
GOTTA SOAR LIKE AN EAGLE...!
WHAT THE FUCK--
YOU STUPID FUCKING BASTARD AAAAAAAAAHH!!
?
PANZERS VORWAERTS MARSCH.

OH JESUS CHRIST ALMIGHTY, PANTHERS!!
SONS OF BITCHES'LL HAVE US FOR BREAKFAST! GUNNER, TANK, ARMOR-PIERCING!
TRAVERSE RIGHT...!
STEADY... ON!
THIS AIN'T NO FUCKIN' PATROL, THIS IS A FULL-SCALE ATTACK--!
RANGE FIFTY! FIRE!
"THE NEW GUN WAS WORSE THAN USELESS, OF COURSE."

"BUT THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN ALWAYS RELY ON."
UH?
CODY?
AND THESE WERE REAL MEN, DON'T FORGET.


"REAL FLESH AND BLOOD."
"NOT MULTICOLORED SHIT DREAMED UP BY OVERGROWN KIDS."
"WHO'S GOING TO TELL THE WORLD ABOUT THEM?"
"WHO'S GOING TO MAKE SURE THEIR STORIES LIVE ON?"


THE REST OF THE HISTORY OF THE BULGE...


WELL, IT'S AN EPIC.
CHAOS AT FIRST, MEN RUNNING FOR THEIR LIVES, OR QUITTING... BUT OTHERS DOING WHAT THEY CAN. LITTLE PATCHWORK UNITS THROWN TOGETHER FROM WHOEVER COMES ALONG--SOME CORPORAL GRABS A COUPLE OF ENGINEERS, A DRIVER OUT OF GAS, A *COOK,* AND THEY PICK UP THEIR RIFLES AND CHOOSE THEIR SPOT.
AND HOLD.

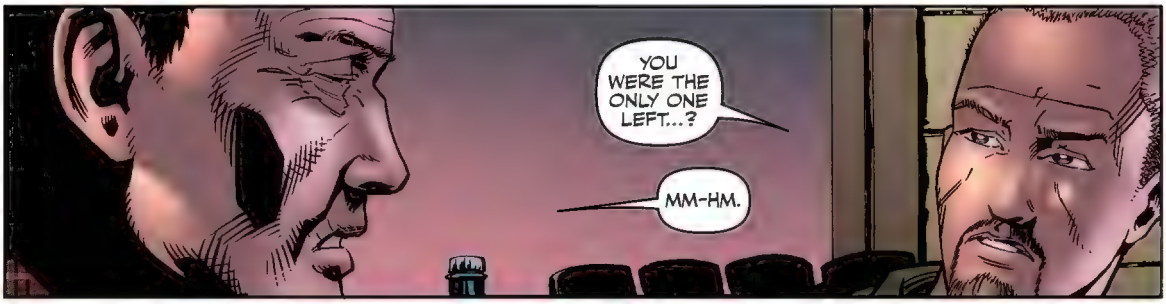
THEY'RE BLEEDING THE GERMANS OUT, YOU SEE. ONE PINPRICK AFTER ANOTHER.
THEY'RE BUYING TIME FOR THE AIRBORNE TO GET INTO POSITION AT BASTOGNE, AND FOR PATTON'S THIRD ARMY TO MAKE ITS WAY UP FROM THE SOUTH. AND PRETTY SOON EVERYONE'S FIGHTING, HITTING THE BASTARDS WITH EVERYTHING THEY'VE GOT, UNTIL THE SUN COMES OUT AGAIN...
THEN THE AIR FORCE CAN GO BACK TO WORK.

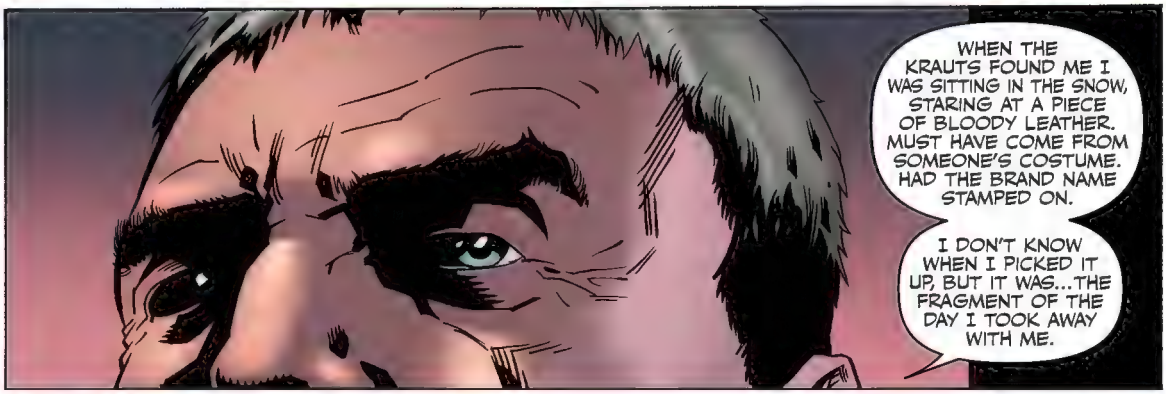
LONG TIME AGO, NOW. MOST PEOPLE DON'T EVEN KNOW ANY MORE.
BUT--

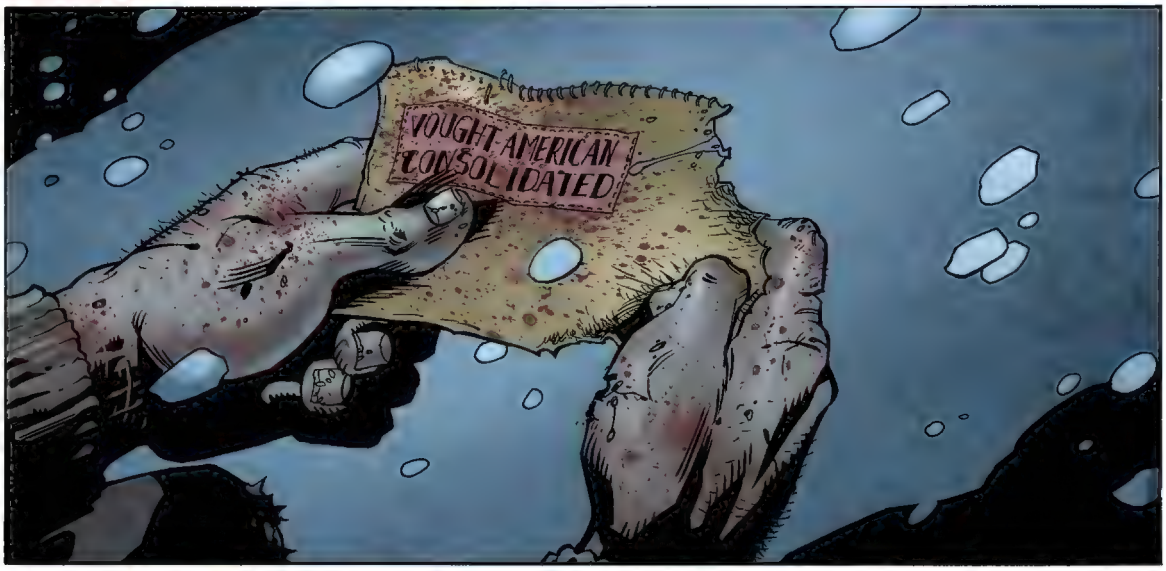
"IT'S WHY I'LL ALWAYS BE PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN SOLDIER."

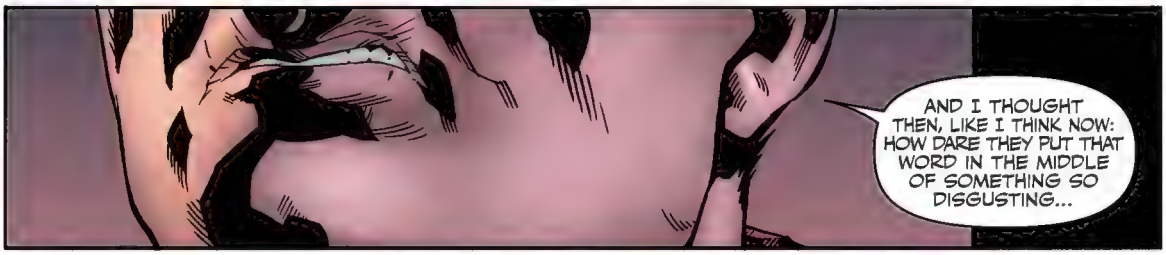
"MY BATTLE, THOUGH, IT ENDED THERE IN THAT CLEARING.
"NOT LONG AFTER NIGHTFALL A PANZER-GRENADIER PATROL CAME THROUGH--WEHRMACHT THIS TIME, NOT S.S., THANK CHRIST--AND FOUND ME IN THE MIDDLE OF IT ALL. THEY PATCHED ME UP AND SENT ME TO THE REAR, AND I SPENT THE REST OF THE WAR IN A P.O.W. COMPOUND OUTSIDE LEIPZIG.
"IT WAS SOME TIME BEFORE I TOLD ANYONE WHAT HAPPENED. TOOK ME LONG ENOUGH JUST TO GET IT STRAIGHT IN MY HEAD."
"THE CONDITION MY MIND WAS IN, I'M LUCKY I EVEN MANAGED THAT MUCH."
HEP MUH
HEP MUH
HEP MUH

HEP M--









next: "...AND BY GOD, WE ARE GOING TO COLLECT."

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FIFTY-FOUR

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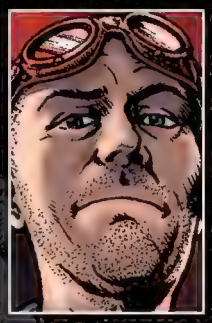

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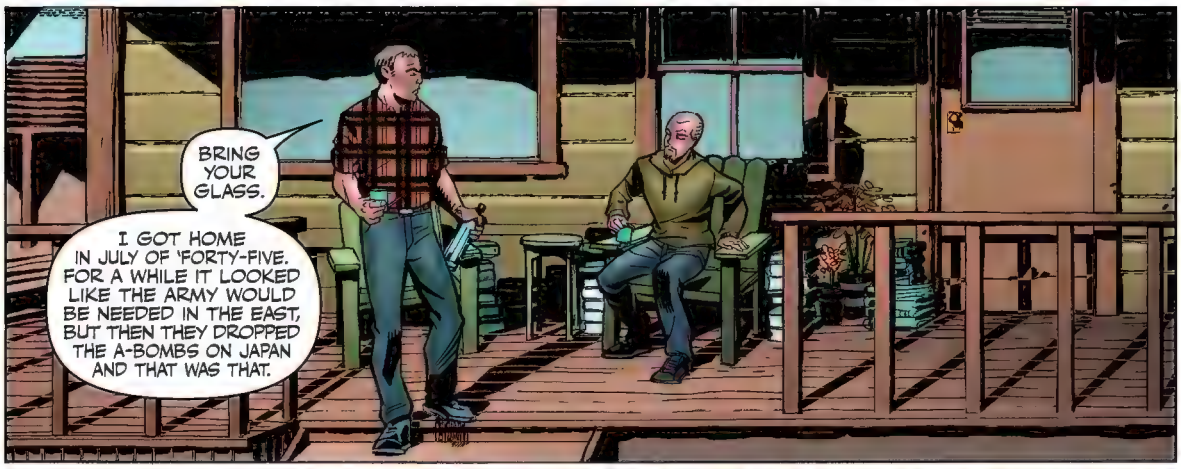

BRING YOUR GLASS.
I GOT HOME IN JULY OF 'FORTY-FIVE. FOR A WHILE IT LOOKED LIKE THE ARMY WOULD BE NEEDED IN THE EAST, BUT THEN THEY DROPPED THE A-BOMBS ON JAPAN AND THAT WAS THAT.

SO, NO WAR, NEW WORLD, AND I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT MY PLACE IS IN IT. AFTER THE BUSINESS IN THE WOODS I HAVE NO SENSE OF VICTORY WHATSOEVER; I FEEL LIKE THERE'S STILL UNFINISHED BUSINESS, SOME BATTLE OR OTHER I SHOULD GO AND FLING MYSELF INTO.
BUT NO WAR, LIKE I SAY. SO WHAT TO DO?

BY CHANCE I RUN INTO RICK BURNHAM, OLD FRIEND OF MINE FROM MY DARTMOUTH DAYS. I TELL HIM A LITTLE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED; TELL HIM NO ONE, NOT A SINGLE OFFICER I'VE SPOKEN TO SINCE THE P.O.W. CAMP, WANTS TO HEAR A SINGLE WORD ABOUT IT.
HE TELLS ME ABOUT SOME PEOPLE HE KNOWS IN WASHINGTON: HE'S GOING OUT THERE THE FOLLOWING WEEK, AND I SHOULD COME ALONG. THEY'RE LOOKING FOR GUYS LIKE US, HE SAYS, YOUNG AND HUNGRY, NOT DONE YET.
I SAY I'M NOT HUNGRY, RICK, ALL I AM IS ANGRY...

HE SAYS THAT'LL DO JUST FINE, AND THAT'S HOW I TAKE MY FIRST STEP TOWARDS JOINING THE C.I.A.

JINGS...

HERE, DO YOU OWN ALL THIS?

FAMILY'S RICH.

IN D.C. I MEET THESE FRIENDS OF RICK'S: ALL YOUNG OFFICERS OR EX-OFFICERS, ALL IVY LEAGUE BOYS FROM GOOD FAMILIES, AND ALL--ONE WAY OR ANOTHER--WITH THE SAME AXE TO GRIND.

AND ONE EXCEPTION: WILD BILL DONOVAN. EVER HEARD OF HIM?

UH...

"RAN THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES DURING THE WAR, PRETTY MUCH WHAT WOULD BECOME THE AGENCY IN PEACETIME. LARGER THAN LIFE CHARACTER; A COUPLE OF HUNDRED YEARS AGO HE WOULD HAVE BEEN A PIRATE.

"WHEN IN EVIL COMPANY, TRY TO BLEND IN--THAT WAS ONE OF HIS.

"NOW, I KNEW RICK WAS A MARINE, BUT UNTIL THEN I HADN'T KNOWN HE'D BEEN AT TARAWA. IT WAS AN ATOLL IN THE PACIFIC, WHERE THE HIGGINS BOATS GOT HUNG UP ON A REEF AND OUR GUYS HAD TO WADE THE REST OF THE WAY, STRAIGHT INTO THE JAP FIRE.

"RICK TALKED ABOUT AFTERWARDS, THE SAND BLACK-RED AND THE SURF JUST BLOODY FROTH, AND BODIES--SO MANY BODIES AND PARTS OF THEM, WALLOWING TOGETHER LIKE A GIANT RAFT, SHIFTING AND SHOVING UP LIMB AFTER LIMB...

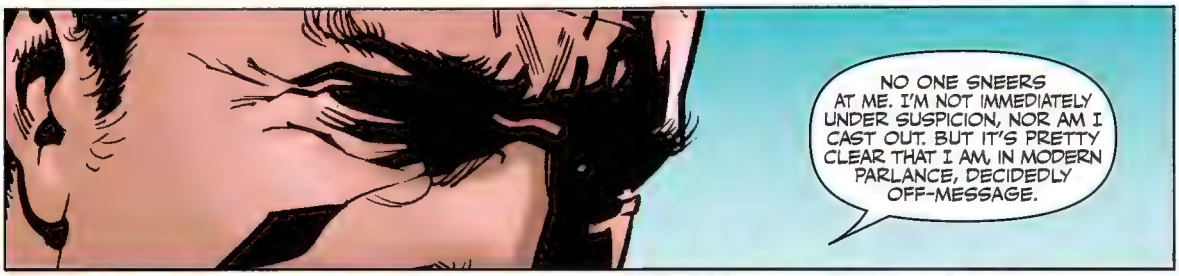
"THIS *MASS* HAD BEEN HIS MEN, HE SAID, AND GRADUALLY I BEGAN TO SEE WHY WE WERE THERE."

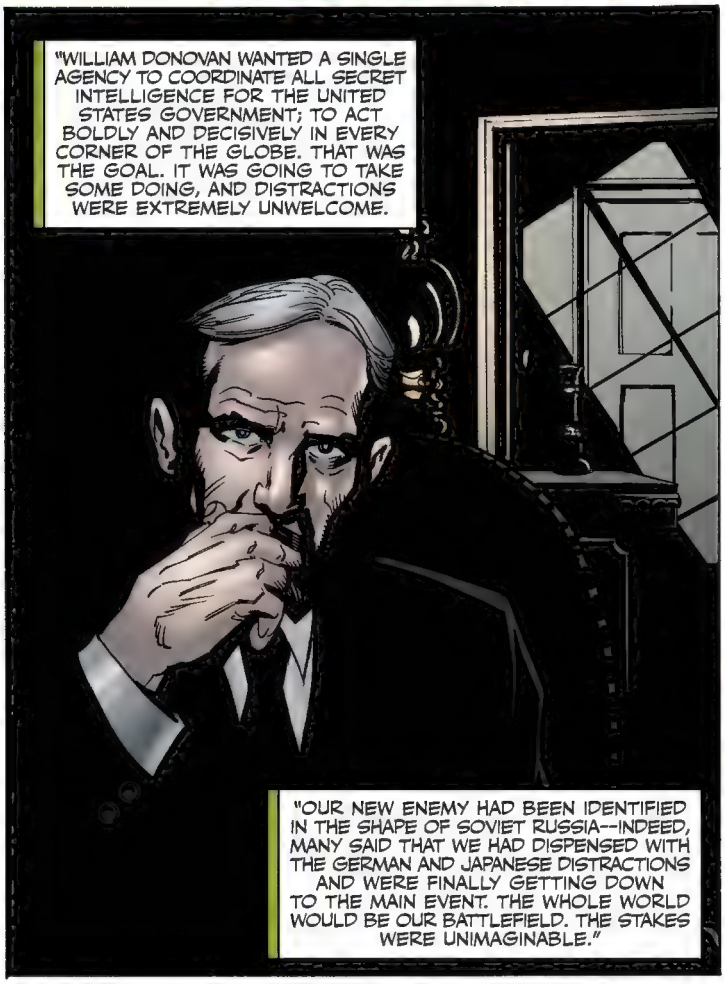
ALL I COULD THINK, SIR, WAS...
JESUS, THIS HAD BETTER HAVE BEEN FOR *SOMETHING.*
GENTLEMEN.
THERE ARE AMERICAN BOYS LYING STREWN ACROSS BEACHES, OR FIELDS, OR THE BOTTOMS OF OCEANS, OR HANGING FROM BARBED WIRE, ALL OVER THIS ENTIRE PLANET. AND THEY DID NOT DIE SO THE OLD WAYS COULD CONTINUE.
THE BRITISH AND FRENCH AND DUTCH WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO RESTORE THEIR EMPIRES, TO CARRY ON AS IF NOTHING HAS HAPPENED. WE WILL NOT ALLOW WHAT HAS BEEN FOUGHT FOR--*PAID FOR*--TO SLIP THROUGH OUR FINGERS.
THE WORLD OWES US, GENTLEMEN:
AND BY GOD, WE ARE GOING TO COLLECT.
AN' YOU WENT FOR IT...?
IT HAD BEEN A LONG WAR, HUGHIE.

"WE STOOD ON OUR BEACHES, OR IN OUR CLEARINGS IN THE WOODS. WE KNELT IN THE BLOOD OF OUR BELOVED DEAD.
"WE REACHED OUT FOR SOMETHING TO MAKE IT RIGHT, AND NOT ONCE DID WE CONSIDER THAT WE WERE STARTING FROM THE WRONG PLACE.
"ALL WE COULD THINK WAS THAT THERE HAD TO BE SOME MEANING TO IT. THINGS LIKE THIS, THEY COULDN'T HAPPEN AND THE WORLD NOT EVEN BLINK.
"BUT DRESS IT UP HOWEVER WE MIGHT, AS DEBT COLLECTED TO BE PAID TOWARDS BETTER TIMES, AS PROTECTION FOR THE FUTURE AGAINST REPEAT AFFLICTIONS...
"THE MEANING WE HAD CHOSEN WAS REVENGE."
BARBARY COAST
part three

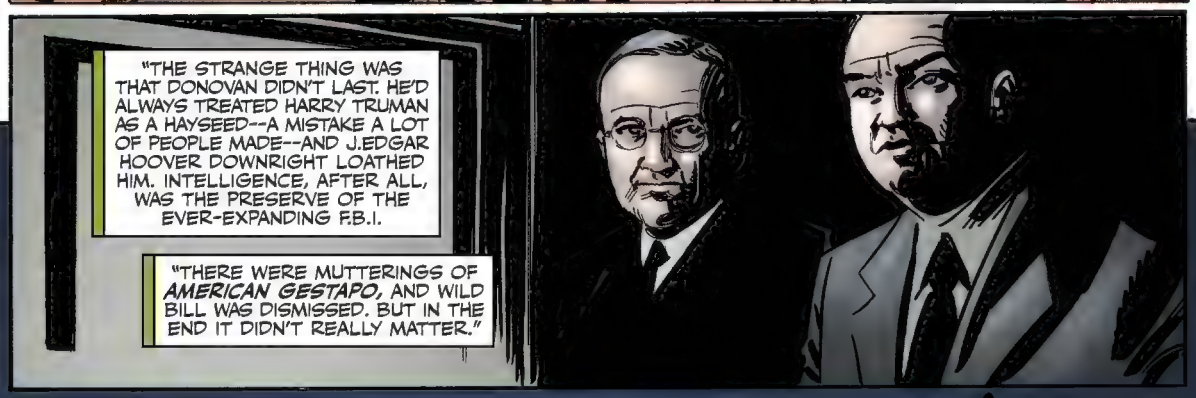
MORE?
AYE.
PLEASE.
SHE WAS A DOLL. SHE MADE YOU-- BELIEVE IN THINGS.
I KNOW WHICH ONE IT WAS DONE IT TO HER. AN' I'M GONNA FUCKIN' HAVE HIM FOR IT.
WHO...?
ONE OF THE BIG BOYS.
I THOUGHT... IT WASN'T SO MUCH THE WAR YOU BLAMED FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR MEN...
QUITE RIGHT.
IT WAS V.A.C.. THEIR SUPES.
AFTER ALL, YOU CAN'T REALLY BLAME THE WAFFEN S.S. FOR DOING WHAT COMES NATURALLY.
BUT A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE MORAL HIGH GROUND.

"YOU SEE, WHEN THE TIME CAME FOR ME TO TELL MY STORY...
"WELL, YOU CAN PROBABLY IMAGINE. IT'S NINETEEN FORTY-FIVE, AND I'M TALKING ABOUT FLYING MEN AND PEOPLE WHO LIFT TANKS, AND I'M SAYING THEY WERE ALL ON THE PAYROLL OF A MAJOR DEFENSE CONTRACTOR..."


NO ONE SNEERS AT ME. I'M NOT IMMEDIATELY UNDER SUSPICION, NOR AM I CAST OUT. BUT IT'S PRETTY CLEAR THAT I AM, IN MODERN PARLANCE, DECIDEDLY OFF-MESSAGE.


"WILLIAM DONOVAN WANTED A SINGLE AGENCY TO COORDINATE ALL SECRET INTELLIGENCE FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT; TO ACT BOLDLY AND DECISIVELY IN EVERY CORNER OF THE GLOBE. THAT WAS THE GOAL. IT WAS GOING TO TAKE SOME DOING, AND DISTRACTIONS WERE EXTREMELY UNWELCOME.
"OUR NEW ENEMY HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED IN THE SHAPE OF SOVIET RUSSIA--INDEED, MANY SAID THAT WE HAD DISPENSED WITH THE GERMAN AND JAPANESE DISTRACTIONS AND WERE FINALLY GETTING DOWN TO THE MAIN EVENT. THE WHOLE WORLD WOULD BE OUR BATTLEFIELD. THE STAKES WERE UNIMAGINABLE."

AND SO... CONVINCING MYSELF THAT MY EXPERIENCE HAD BEEN A FREAK INCIDENT... I ALLOWED MYSELF TO BE SWEPT ALONG ON THE GREAT AMERICAN CRUSADE.

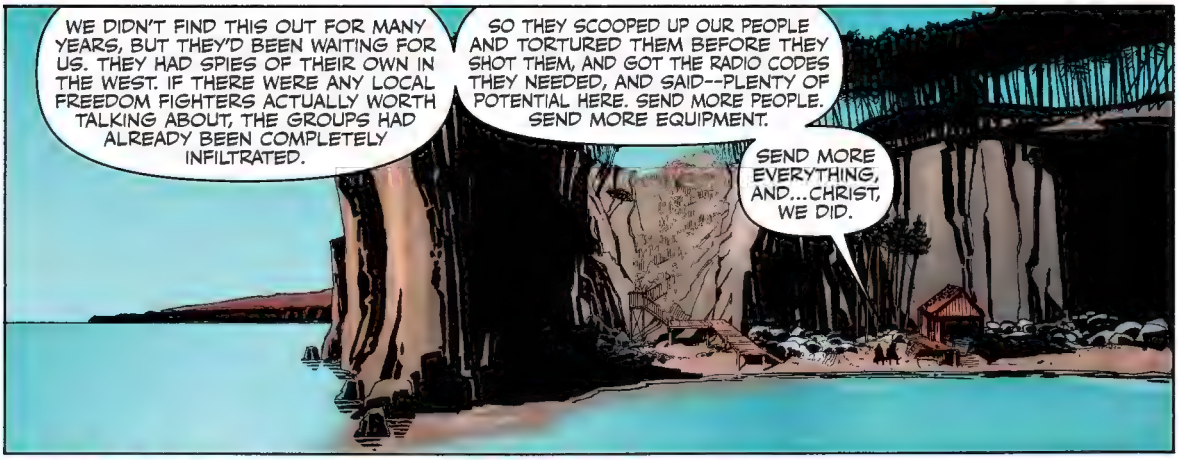


"HIS SPIRIT REMAINED. THERE WERE ENOUGH OF US, HIS ACOLYTES, TO SEE THINGS THROUGH.

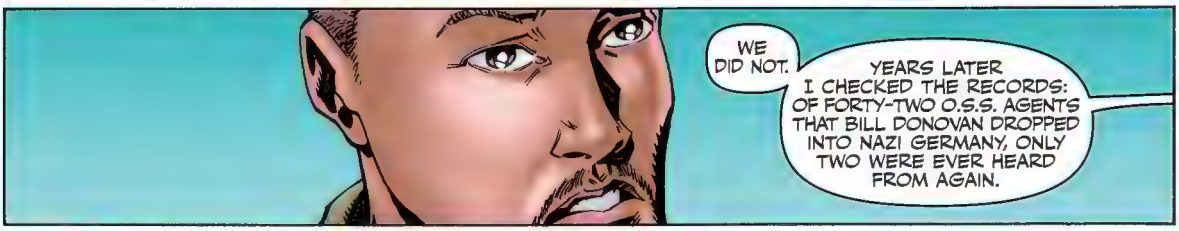
"WE BUILT THE SPY SERVICE HE'D WANTED AND WENT RIGHT TO WORK. THE IRON CURTAIN WAS A REALITY BY 'FORTY-SIX AND WE WERE READY FOR IT; WE DROPPED AGENTS ALL OVER RUSSIA AND EASTERN EUROPE, GAVE THEM WEAPONS AND TRANSMITTERS, TOLD THEM TO LIASE WITH LOCAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND ESTABLISH AN ESPIONAGE NETWORK THAT WOULD INFECT THE SOVIET UNION LIKE A VIRUS.

"EXCITING STUFF. HEADY TIMES. CLOAK AND DAGGER MERCHANTS ON THE GROUND, US BACK IN WASHINGTON DIRECTING OPERATIONS AS IF THEY WERE A FINELY-BALANCED GAME OF CHESS.

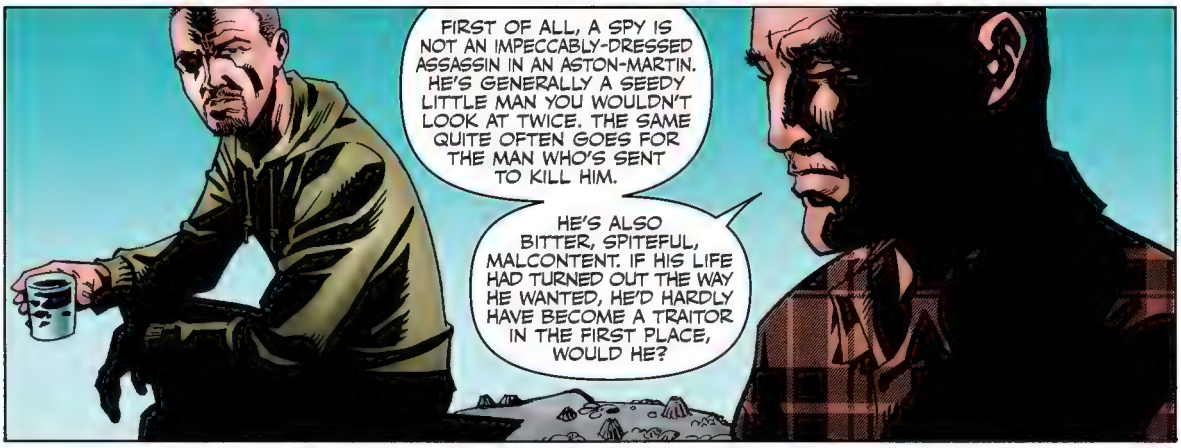
"AND THE RUSSIANS..."

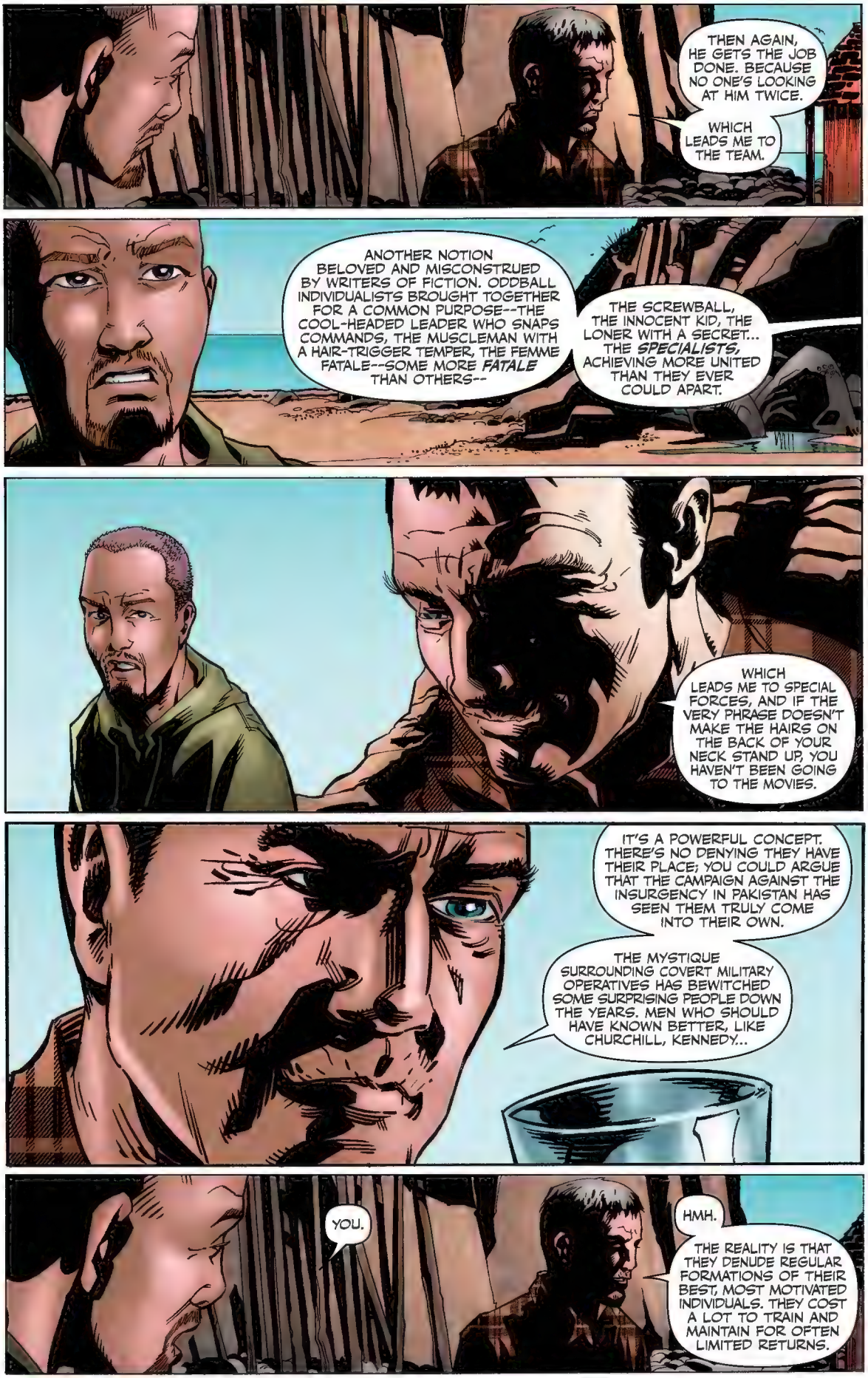

WE DIDN'T FIND THIS OUT FOR MANY YEARS, BUT THEY'D BEEN WAITING FOR US. THEY HAD SPIES OF THEIR OWN IN THE WEST. IF THERE WERE ANY LOCAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS ACTUALLY WORTH TALKING ABOUT, THE GROUPS HAD ALREADY BEEN COMPLETELY INFILTRATED.
SO THEY SCOOPED UP OUR PEOPLE AND TORTURED THEM BEFORE THEY SHOT THEM, AND GOT THE RADIO CODES THEY NEEDED, AND SAID--PLENTY OF POTENTIAL HERE. SEND MORE PEOPLE. SEND MORE EQUIPMENT.
SEND MORE EVERYTHING, AND...CHRIST, WE DID.

OUR MISTAKE WAS THINKING A BUNCH OF CAN-DO BOY SCOUTS COULD TAKE ON ONE OF THE MOST SOPHISTICATED ESPIONAGE ORGANIZATIONS IN HISTORY.
IT DIDN'T MATTER THAT THE ENEMY WERE COMMUNISTS, BECAUSE FIRST AND FOREMOST THEY WERE RUSSIAN. SOVIET OR TSARIST, THEY HAD SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS OF CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS EXPERIENCE TO DRAW ON.

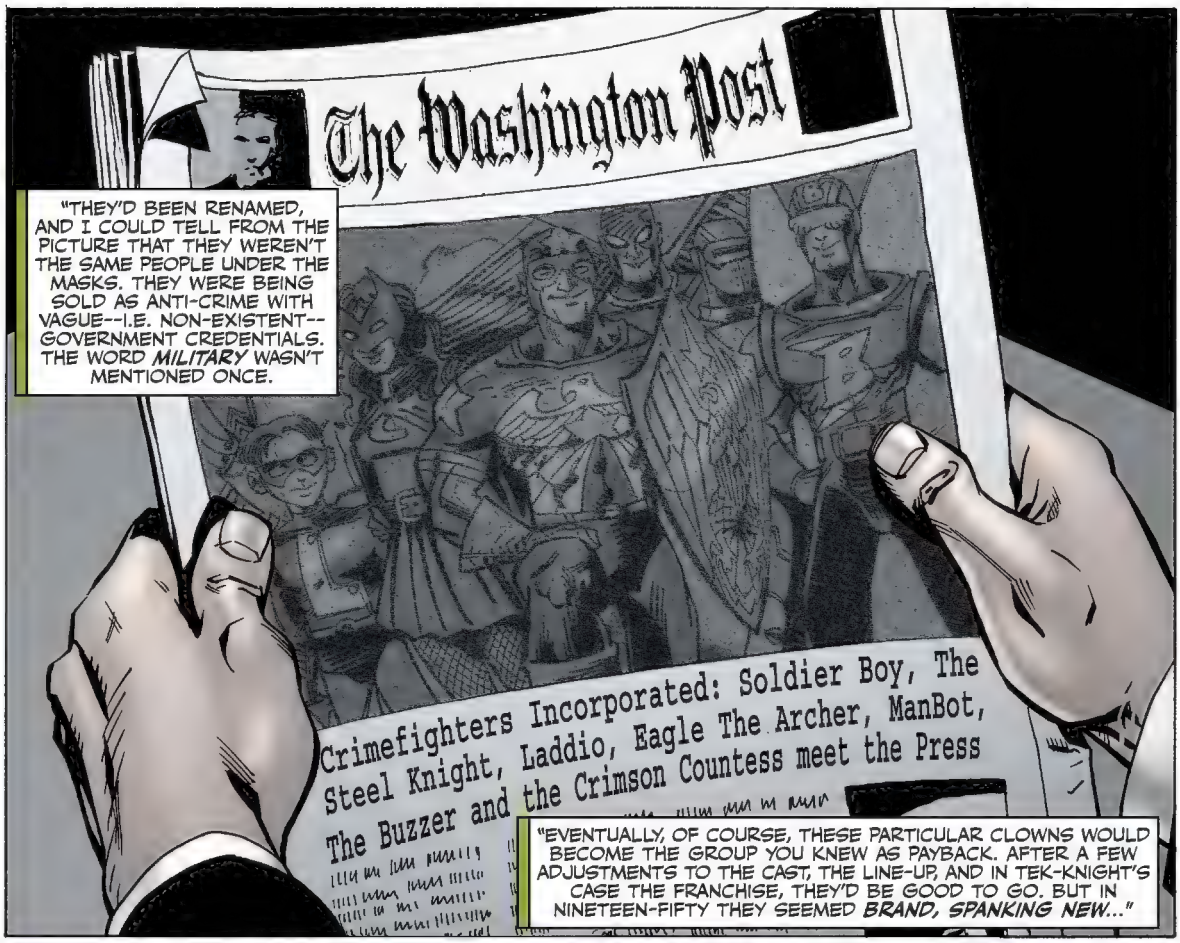

WE DID NOT.
YEARS LATER I CHECKED THE RECORDS: OF FORTY-TWO O.S.S. AGENTS THAT BILL DONOVAN DROPPED INTO NAZI GERMANY, ONLY TWO WERE EVER HEARD FROM AGAIN.

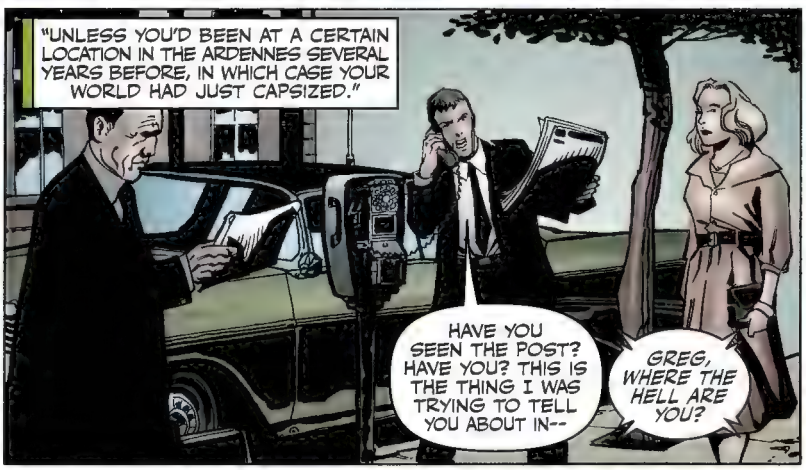
AT THIS POINT I SHOULD TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT SPIES, AND TEAMS.
AND SPECIAL FORCES.


FIRST OF ALL, A SPY IS NOT AN IMPECCABLY-DRESSED ASSASSIN IN AN ASTON-MARTIN. HE'S GENERALLY A SEEDY LITTLE MAN YOU WOULDN'T LOOK AT TWICE. THE SAME QUITE OFTEN GOES FOR THE MAN WHO'S SENT TO KILL HIM.
HE'S ALSO BITTER, SPITEFUL, MALCONTENT. IF HIS LIFE HAD TURNED OUT THE WAY HE WANTED, HE'D HARDLY HAVE BECOME A TRAITOR IN THE FIRST PLACE, WOULD HE?


THEN AGAIN, HE GETS THE JOB DONE. BECAUSE NO ONE'S LOOKING AT HIM TWICE.
WHICH LEADS ME TO THE TEAM.
ANOTHER NOTION BELOVED AND MISCONSTRUED BY WRITERS OF FICTION. ODDBALL INDIVIDUALISTS BROUGHT TOGETHER FOR A COMMON PURPOSE--THE COOL-HEADED LEADER WHO SNAPS COMMANDS, THE MUSCLEMAN WITH A HAIR-TRIGGER TEMPER, THE FEMME FATALE--SOME MORE *FATALE* THAN OTHERS--
THE SCREWBALL, THE INNOCENT KID, THE LONER WITH A SECRET... THE *SPECIALISTS,* ACHIEVING MORE UNITED THAN THEY EVER COULD APART.
WHICH LEADS ME TO SPECIAL FORCES, AND IF THE VERY PHRASE DOESN'T MAKE THE HAIRS ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK STAND UP, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN GOING TO THE MOVIES.
IT'S A POWERFUL CONCEPT. THERE'S NO DENYING THEY HAVE THEIR PLACE; YOU COULD ARGUE THAT THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE INSURGENCY IN PAKISTAN HAS SEEN THEM TRULY COME INTO THEIR OWN.
THE MYSTIQUE SURROUNDING COVERT MILITARY OPERATIVES HAS BEWITCHED SOME SURPRISING PEOPLE DOWN THE YEARS. MEN WHO SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER, LIKE CHURCHILL, KENNEDY...
YOU.
HMH.
THE REALITY IS THAT THEY DENUDE REGULAR FORMATIONS OF THEIR BEST, MOST MOTIVATED INDIVIDUALS. THEY COST A LOT TO TRAIN AND MAINTAIN FOR OFTEN LIMITED RETURNS.

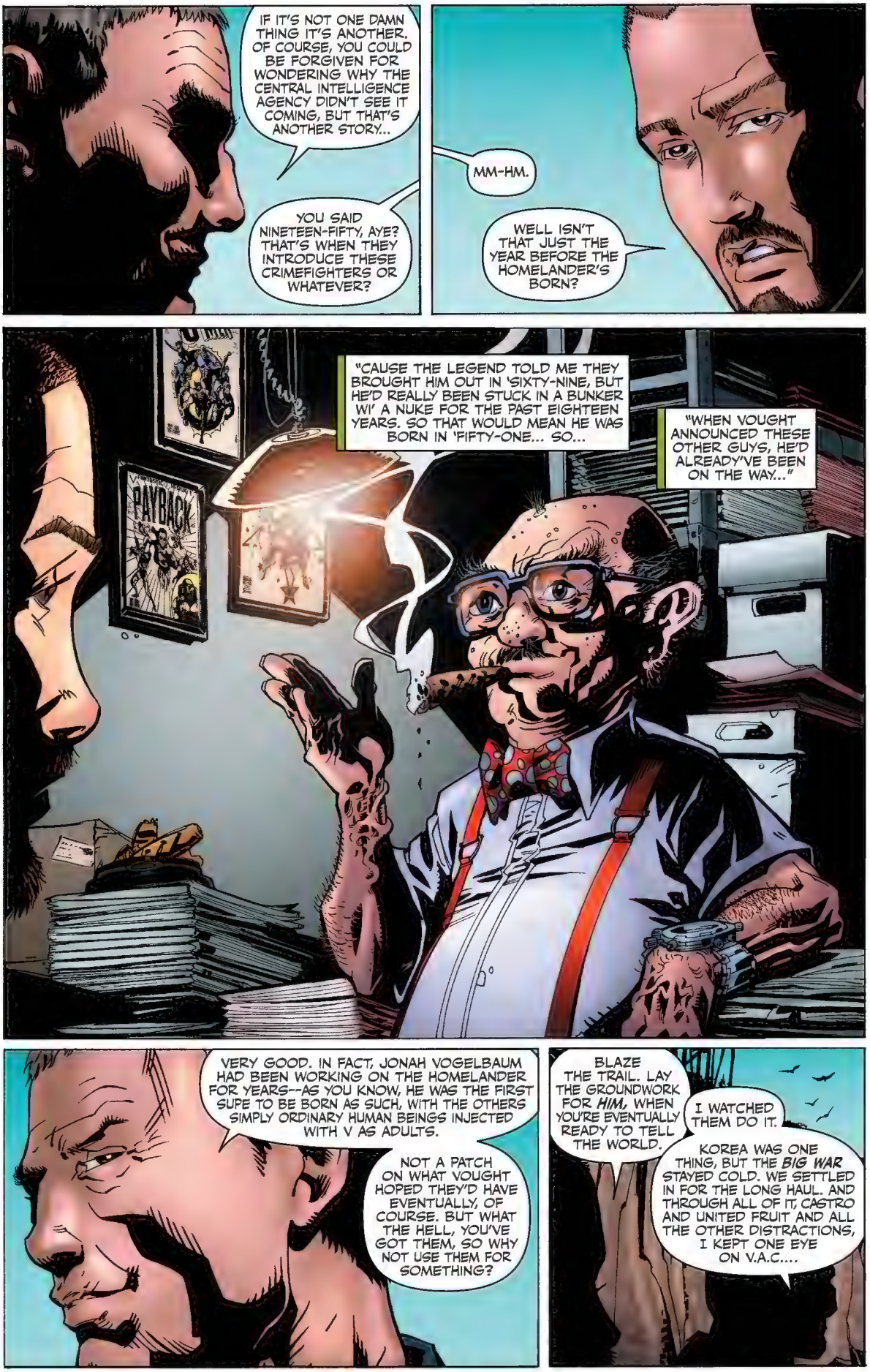
AND THEY CAN FIND IT HARD TO JUSTIFY THE EXPENSE. SOMETIMES, TO DO SO, THEY CREATE THEIR OWN MISSIONS, BECOMING IN EFFECT PRIVATE ARMIES.
PAKISTAN AGAIN. WHERE, YOU MAY HAVE READ, CIVILIAN FATALITIES HAVE BECOME A SOURCE OF MUCH EMBARASSMENT TO U.S. MILITARY COMMANDERS: ALMOST AS MUCH AS THEIR OWN INABILITY TO REIN IN THE SEAL AND DELTA TEAMS RESPONSIBLE.
YOU THINK THE BOYS HAVE TURNED INTO THAT...?
SO DO YOU, ACCORDING TO M.M.
I JUST... WONDERED.
I MEAN I KEN WHAT A BLACK BUDGET IS, AN' I CAN'T IMAGINE THE CASH THAT PAYS FOR US IS ON THE BOOKS. WHICH MEANS IT'S-- WELL, IT'S--
OPEN TO ABUSE.
AYE, BUT I MEAN THERE IS-- THERE WAS--IS, WAS, I DUNNO, THERE IS A REAL MISSION HERE. THE SUPES NEED WATCHIN', THERE'S NO DENYIN' THAT.
OH, I KNOW. I KNEW THAT FROM THE BEGINNING.
"SEGUE OVER. THIS IS WHERE MY NARRATIVE--ALONG WITH THE MISSION I'D ASSIGNED MYSELF-- BOTH GET BACK ON TRACK."
DEAR GOD.


The Washington Post
Crimefighters Incorporated: Soldier Boy, The Steel Knight, Laddio, Eagle The Archer, ManBot, The Buzzer and the Crimson Countess meet the Press
"THEY'D BEEN RENAMED, AND I COULD TELL FROM THE PICTURE THAT THEY WEREN'T THE SAME PEOPLE UNDER THE MASKS. THEY WERE BEING SOLD AS ANTI-CRIME WITH VAGUE--I.E. NON-EXISTENT--GOVERNMENT CREDENTIALS. THE WORD MILITARY WASN'T MENTIONED ONCE.
"EVENTUALLY, OF COURSE, THESE PARTICULAR CLOWNS WOULD BECOME THE GROUP YOU KNEW AS PAYBACK. AFTER A FEW ADJUSTMENTS TO THE CAST, THE LINE-UP, AND IN TEK-KNIGHT'S CASE THE FRANCHISE, THEY'D BE GOOD TO GO. BUT IN NINETEEN-FIFTY THEY SEEMED BRAND, SPANKING NEW..."

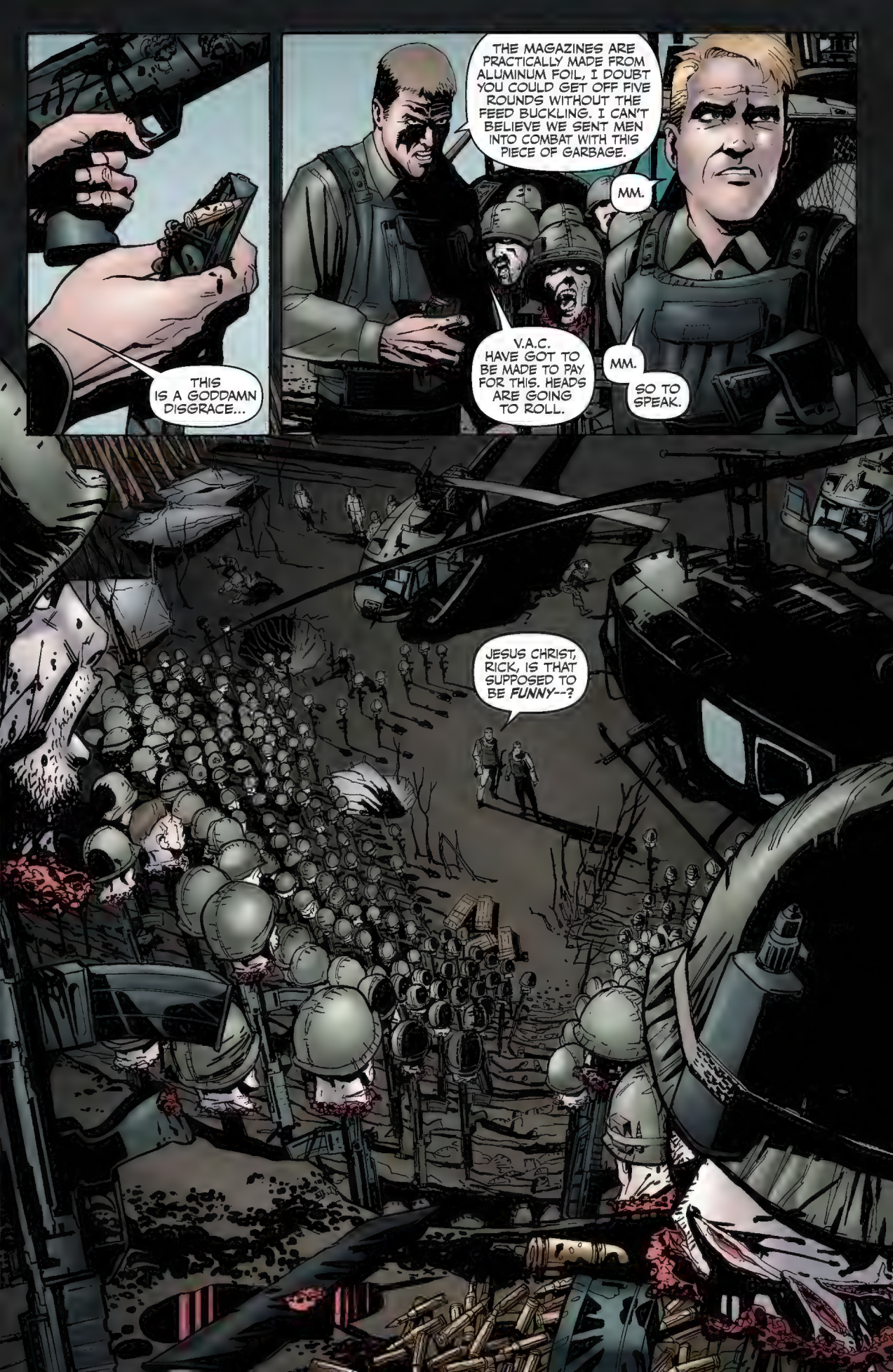

"UNLESS YOU'D BEEN AT A CERTAIN LOCATION IN THE ARDENNES SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE, IN WHICH CASE YOUR WORLD HAD JUST CAPSIZED."
HAVE YOU SEEN THE POST? HAVE YOU? THIS IS THE THING I WAS TRYING TO TELL YOU ABOUT IN--
GREG, WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU?

ONE WAY
I'M IN THE PARK, IT'S SATURDAY. LOOK--
WELL GET YOUR ASS IN HERE RIGHT AWAY. SATURDAY'S CANCELLED.
WHAT?

NORTH KOREA JUST INVADED THE SOUTH. THERE'S A FUCKING COMMUNIST ARMY COMING ACROSS THE THIRTY-EIGHTH PARALLEL, AND IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANYTHING CAN STOP THEM.
YOU BETTER GET IN HERE NOW, PAL, BECAUSE WE'RE IN A SHOOTING WAR...

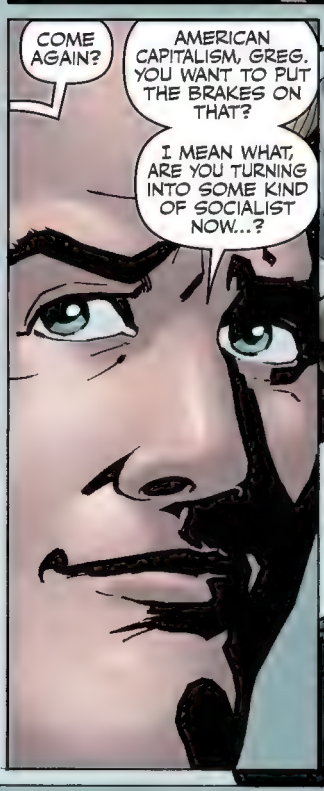

IF IT'S NOT ONE DAMN THING IT'S ANOTHER. OF COURSE, YOU COULD BE FORGIVEN FOR WONDERING WHY THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY DIDN'T SEE IT COMING, BUT THAT'S ANOTHER STORY...
YOU SAID NINETEEN-FIFTY, AYE? THAT'S WHEN THEY INTRODUCE THESE CRIMEFIGHTERS OR WHATEVER?
MM-HM.
WELL ISN'T THAT JUST THE YEAR BEFORE THE HOMELANDER'S BORN?
"CAUSE THE LEGEND TOLD ME THEY BROUGHT HIM OUT IN 'SIXTY-NINE, BUT HE'D REALLY BEEN STUCK IN A BUNKER WI' A NUKE FOR THE PAST EIGHTEEN YEARS. SO THAT WOULD MEAN HE WAS BORN IN 'FIFTY-ONE... SO...
"WHEN VOUGHT ANNOUNCED THESE OTHER GUYS, HE'D ALREADY'VE BEEN ON THE WAY..."
PAYBACK
VERY GOOD. IN FACT, JONAH VOGELBAUM HAD BEEN WORKING ON THE HOMELANDER FOR YEARS--AS YOU KNOW, HE WAS THE FIRST SUPE TO BE BORN AS SUCH, WITH THE OTHERS SIMPLY ORDINARY HUMAN BEINGS INJECTED WITH V AS ADULTS.
NOT A PATCH ON WHAT VOUGHT HOPED THEY'D HAVE EVENTUALLY, OF COURSE. BUT WHAT THE HELL, YOU'VE GOT THEM, SO WHY NOT USE THEM FOR SOMETHING?
BLAZE THE TRAIL. LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR *HIM,* WHEN YOU'RE EVENTUALLY READY TO TELL THE WORLD.
I WATCHED THEM DO IT.
KOREA WAS ONE THING, BUT THE *BIG WAR* STAYED COLD. WE SETTLED IN FOR THE LONG HAUL. AND THROUGH ALL OF IT, CASTRO AND UNITED FRUIT AND ALL THE OTHER DISTRACTIONS, I KEPT ONE EYE ON V.A.C....

"THEY WERE RUNNING THE SAME MOVIE STAR ROUTINE THEY DO TODAY, AND THEY WERE SMART ABOUT IT: ANYONE MENTIONING SUPES IN DEFENSE WHEN THEY SAW THESE GUYS WOULD HAVE BEEN LAUGHED RIGHT OUT THE DOOR. A LESS SUSPICIOUS MAN THAN I AM MIGHT HAVE EVEN THOUGHT THEY'D LEARNED THEIR LESSON--AFTER ALL, WHO THE HELL WOULD WANT TO RISK ANOTHER MASSACRE?
"BUT I WATCHED THEM WORMING THEIR WAY INTO THE POPULAR CULTURE, WRAPPING THE FLAG AROUND THEM NICE AND TIGHT, AND ALL I COULD THINK WAS *THIS IS GOING SOMEWHERE.*"
"Welcome home" to the King
Presley: "You guys got a lot of the same power I has"
THE IDEA BEING THAT I'D ONE DAY MARCH INTO MY BOSS'S OFFICE, AND PRESENT HIM WITH DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF THE GREATEST THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY SINCE THE CONFEDERACY. THEN I GOT A WAKE-UP CALL.
THE LEGEND TOLD YOU ABOUT THE IA DRANG?
AYE...
"I WAS IN SAIGON AT THE TIME, VISITING THE FIELD OFFICE THERE WITH RICK BURNHAM. RICK WAS SENIOR TO ME BY NOW, HAVING KEPT HIS MIND ON THE JOB A LITTLE MORE SUCCESSFULLY.
"WORD CAME IN THAT SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAD HAPPENED UP NORTH, AND WE GRABBED OUR SIDEARMS AND A COUPLE OF FLAKVESTS AND HOPPED THE VERY NEXT HUEY.
"IF I'M HONEST, WE HAD THE HARD-ONS THAT VETERANS SOMETIMES GET, WHENEVER THEY CATCH A WHIFF OF GUNSMOKE."
"AFTER ALL, IT HAD BEEN OVER TWENTY YEARS."


THIS IS A GODDAMN DISGRACE...
THE MAGAZINES ARE PRACTICALLY MADE FROM ALUMINUM FOIL, I DOUBT YOU COULD GET OFF FIVE ROUNDS WITHOUT THE FEED BUCKLING. I CAN'T BELIEVE WE SENT MEN INTO COMBAT WITH THIS PIECE OF GARBAGE.
MM.
V.A.C. HAVE GOT TO BE MADE TO PAY FOR THIS. HEADS ARE GOING TO ROLL.
MM.
SO TO SPEAK.
JESUS CHRIST, RICK, IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE *FUNNY*--?

CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT THESE KIDS MUST HAVE GONE THROUGH? GETTING OVERRUN? WATCHING THE NOOSE TIGHTEN UNTIL THEY'RE BACK TO BACK, AND THEN IT'S RIFLE BUTTS AND FISTS AND FUCKING *TEETH?*
I DON'T HAVE TO IMAGINE IT. AS YOU VERY WELL KNOW.

SORRY. YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.
I JUST CAN'T SEE HOW THIS HAPPENED, HOW THESE MONEY-GRUBBING *PRICKS* WERE ALLOWED TO EQUIP AMERICAN SOLDIERS...
THEY WERE THE LOWEST BIDDER.

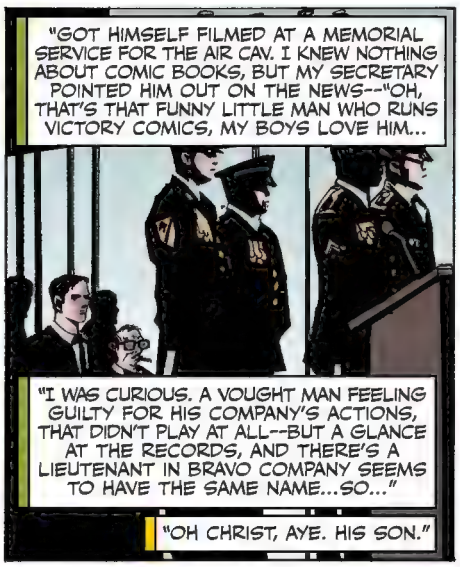

COME AGAIN?
AMERICAN CAPITALISM, GREG. YOU WANT TO PUT THE BRAKES ON THAT?
I MEAN WHAT, ARE YOU TURNING INTO SOME KIND OF SOCIALIST NOW...?

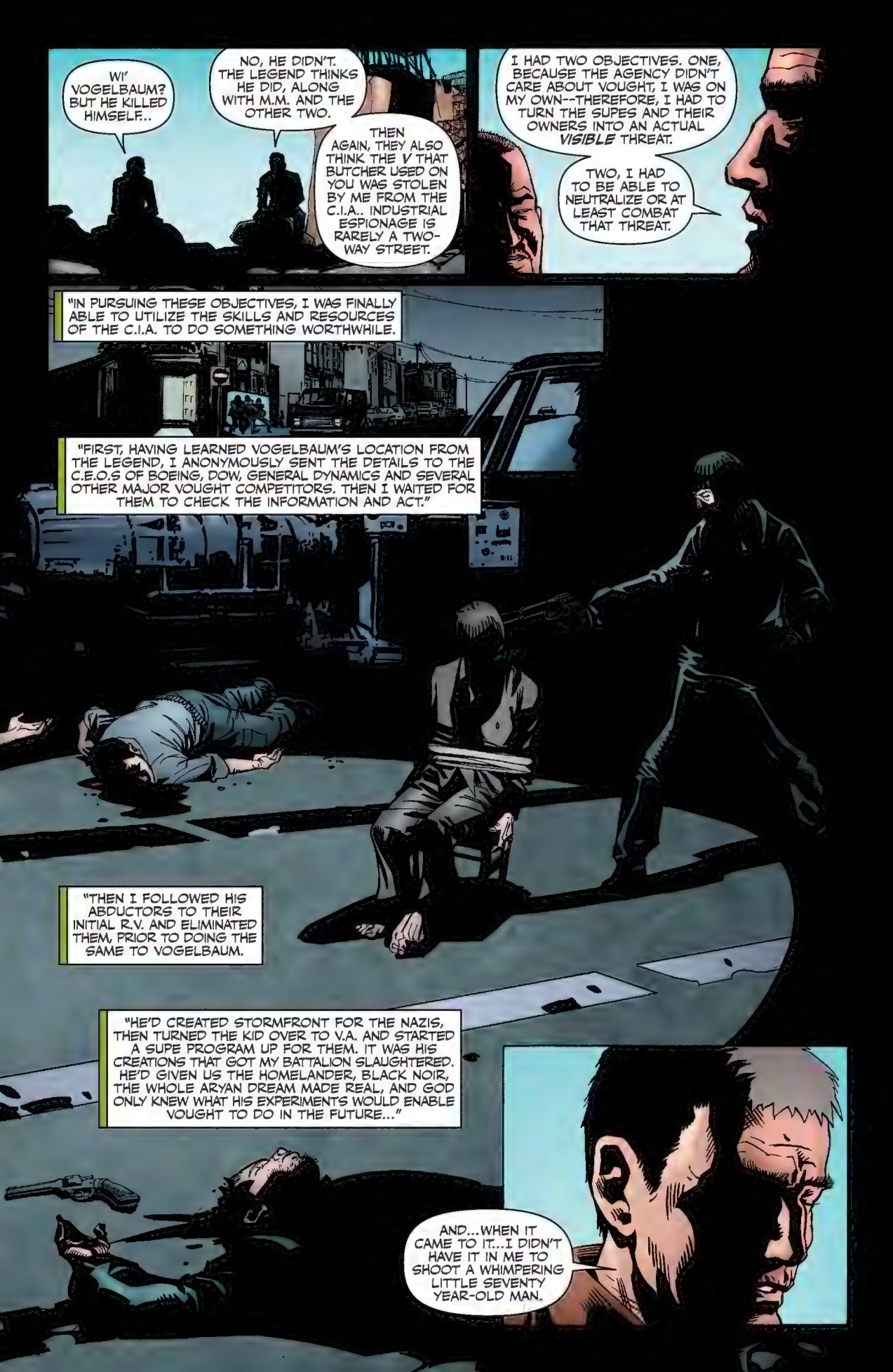
HA FUCKING HA.
I THOUGHT THE POINT OF YOU AND I ANSWERING THE CALL WAS TO STOP THESE THINGS FROM EVER HAPPENING AGAIN?
NO...THE POINT WAS THAT IF THEY WERE GOING TO HAPPEN, WE WERE GOING TO MAKE THEM MEAN SOMETHING.

AND WHAT THE HELL DOES *THIS* MEAN--?
THIS?
THIS IS THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS.

"THE POINT WAS TO ENGAGE SOVIET AND CHINESE COMMUNISM. THE POINT WAS WAR.

"THE DETAILS DIDN'T MATTER A DAMN."




W/' VOGELBAUM? BUT HE KILLED HIMSELF...
NO, HE DIDN'T. THE LEGEND THINKS HE DID, ALONG WITH M.M. AND THE OTHER TWO.
THEN AGAIN, THEY ALSO THINK THE V THAT BUTCHER USED ON YOU WAS STOLEN BY ME FROM THE C.I.A.. INDUSTRIAL ESPIONAGE IS RARELY A TWO-WAY STREET.
I HAD TWO OBJECTIVES. ONE, BECAUSE THE AGENCY DIDN'T CARE ABOUT VOUGHT, I WAS ON MY OWN--THEREFORE, I HAD TO TURN THE SUPES AND THEIR OWNERS INTO AN ACTUAL VISIBLE THREAT.
TWO, I HAD TO BE ABLE TO NEUTRALIZE OR AT LEAST COMBAT THAT THREAT.
"IN PURSUING THESE OBJECTIVES, I WAS FINALLY ABLE TO UTILIZE THE SKILLS AND RESOURCES OF THE C.I.A. TO DO SOMETHING WORTHWHILE.
"FIRST, HAVING LEARNED VOGELBAUM'S LOCATION FROM THE LEGEND, I ANONYMOUSLY SENT THE DETAILS TO THE C.E.O.S OF BOEING, DOW, GENERAL DYNAMICS AND SEVERAL OTHER MAJOR VOUGHT COMPETITORS. THEN I WAITED FOR THEM TO CHECK THE INFORMATION AND ACT."
"THEN I FOLLOWED HIS ABDUCTORS TO THEIR INITIAL R.V. AND ELIMINATED THEM, PRIOR TO DOING THE SAME TO VOGELBAUM.
"HE'D CREATED STORMFRONT FOR THE NAZIS, THEN TURNED THE KID OVER TO V.A. AND STARTED A SUPE PROGRAM UP FOR THEM. IT WAS HIS CREATIONS THAT GOT MY BATTALION SLAUGHTERED. HE'D GIVEN US THE HOMELANDER, BLACK NOIR, THE WHOLE ARYAN DREAM MADE REAL, AND GOD ONLY KNEW WHAT HIS EXPERIMENTS WOULD ENABLE VOUGHT TO DO IN THE FUTURE..."
AND...WHEN IT CAME TO IT...I DIDN'T HAVE IT IN ME TO SHOOT A WHIMPERING LITTLE SEVENTY YEAR-OLD MAN.

"HE WAS THE CLASSIC SCATTERBRAINED ACADEMIC, HIDING IN HIS WORK FROM THE MEMORY OF HIS FAMILY'S MURDER. HIDING FROM THE REALITY OF WHERE HIS WORK WAS HEADED, COME TO THAT.

"HE PUT ME IN MIND OF OPPENHEIMER: REALIZING FAR TOO LATE EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS THAT HE'D ACHIEVED, BEGGING TRUMAN NOT TO USE IT."

AND KILLING HIM WOULDN'T STOP VOUGHT. EVEN IF THEY COULDN'T REPLICATE HIS WORK, THE ENTIRE LINE-UP OF THE SEVEN WAS ALREADY ESTABLISHED.

SO I DECIDED HE WOULD COME AND WORK FOR UNCLE SAM. OR ME, AT ANY RATE.

SO WHY DOES EVERYONE THINK HE SLASHED HIS WRISTS, THEN?

THERE ARE CERTAIN FREELANCERS THE AGENCY EMPLOYS TO PROVIDE CADAVERS--LOOKALIKES, ESSENTIALLY. IT HAPPENS OFF THE BOOKS WITH PAYMENTS IN CASH. NO ONE IN AUTHORITY WANTS TO KNOW.

A RECENTLY-DECEASED GERIATRIC MALE--RIGHT HEIGHT AND WEIGHT, BEATEN BEYOND RECOGNITION WHEN HE RESISTED HIS ABDUCTORS, RADIAL AND ULNAR ARTERIES OPEN--WAS NOT HARD TO LOCATE. SAID ABDUCTORS WERE NEVER FOUND; THEY OBVIOUSLY ABSCONDED WHEN THEY REALIZED THEY'D KILLED THE STAR PRIZE.

"I DECIDED TO GO TO BURNHAM. HE MIGHT NOT HAVE SEEN V.A. AS A THREAT, INITIALLY, BUT HE WAS A FIERCELY LOYAL COMPANY MAN--AND I HAD A FEELING HE WAS HEADED ALL THE WAY TO THE TOP. WHEN I TOLD HIM WHAT VOGELBAUM TOLD ME, HE REACTED EXACTLY LIKE I HOPED.

"HE WAS *LIVID* THAT VOUGHT HAD KEPT SUCH AN OBVIOUS NATIONAL SECURITY ASSET TO THEMSELVES. ***WHO DID VON BRAUN BELONG TO, NASA OR FUCKING MCDONNELL DOUGLAS,*** WAS HOW HE PUT IT.

"ALL OF A SUDDEN, SOMEONE WAS ON MY SIDE."

UP TO A POINT. I KNEW RICK'S FIRST INSTINCT WOULD BE TO START VOGELBAUM WORKING ON SUPES FOR US, UNDER OUR OWN PROGRAM--WHICH WAS EXACTLY WHAT I DIDN'T WANT.

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO CONTROLS THE PURSE STRINGS, YOU CAN'T PUT A HUMAN BRAIN BEHIND POWER LIKE THAT AND EXPECT ANY GOOD TO COME OF IT...

"SO I BRIEFED THE OLD MAN MYSELF. VERY CAREFULLY, VERY PRECISELY. HE'D WOKEN UP TO THE DISASTROUS POTENTIAL OF WHAT HE'D CREATED; IT DIDN'T TAKE MUCH FOR HIM TO PLAY BALL.

"HIS WORK HAD TO BECOME PROHIBITIVELY EXPENSIVE--AND IT DID. IT HAD TO TAKE A LONG, LONG TIME TO BEAR FRUIT--NO PROBLEMS THERE. IT COULD NOT, *EVER,* RESULT IN ANYTHING *LIKE* A SUPERHUMAN THAT THE U.S. ARMY WOULD CONSIDER USING ON THE BATTLEFIELD...

"VOGELBAUM WAS THREE FOR THREE."

SO WHEN I EVENTUALLY DID PRESENT HIS MAGIC FORMULA TO RICK, SEVEN OR EIGHT YEARS LATER, IT WAS WHAT I'D ASKED FOR: A ONE-SHOT INJECTION OF V THAT INCREASED STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE BY A FACTOR OF ABOUT FIFTY. IT DIDN'T MAKE YOU FLY AND IT DIDN'T MAKE YOU BULLETPROOF.

JESUS, IT TOOK HIM LONG ENOUGH, SAYS RICK, HOW MUCH DID IT END UP COSTING? AND I TELL HIM, AND THAT'S WHEN HE HAS HIS FIRST HEART ATTACK.

"HE'D ORGANIZED A BUDGET AND LEFT ME TO DRAW ON IT AS I SAW FIT, AND I'D MADE THE MOST OF THE OPPORTUNITY. THESE WERE THE DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES; IRAN-CONTRA HAD YET TO COME ALONG TO SPOIL THE FUN.

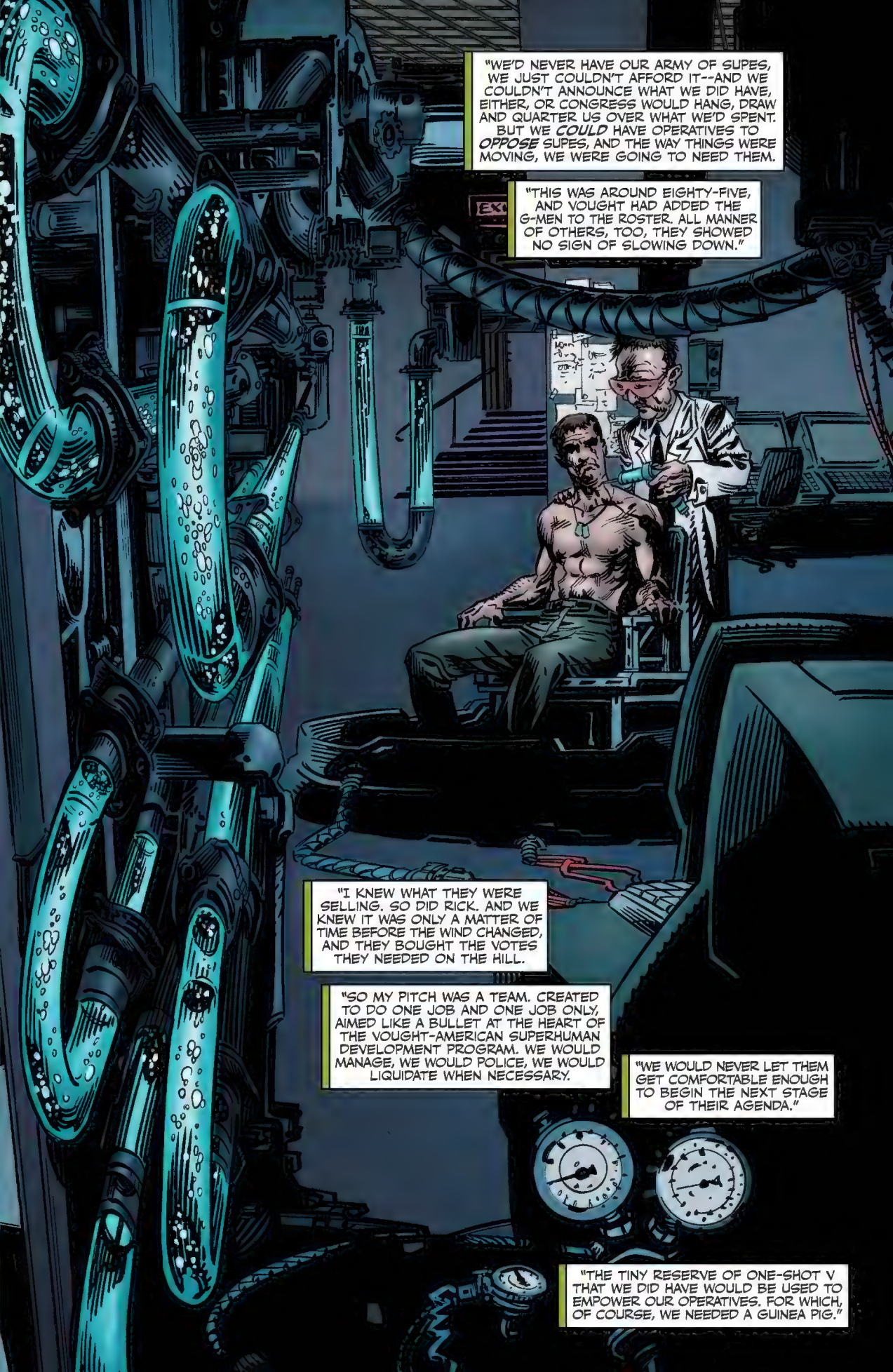
"I WASN'T WORRIED ABOUT RICK. HE WAS TOUGH, HE WAS A SHREWD OPERATOR, AND HE ALWAYS MADE THE MOST OF A BAD SITUATION. I WAS COUNTING ON THAT ONE IN PARTICULAR FOR HIS RETURN."

YOU'RE NO' VERY SENTIMENTAL ABOUT EACH OTHER, ARE YOU...?

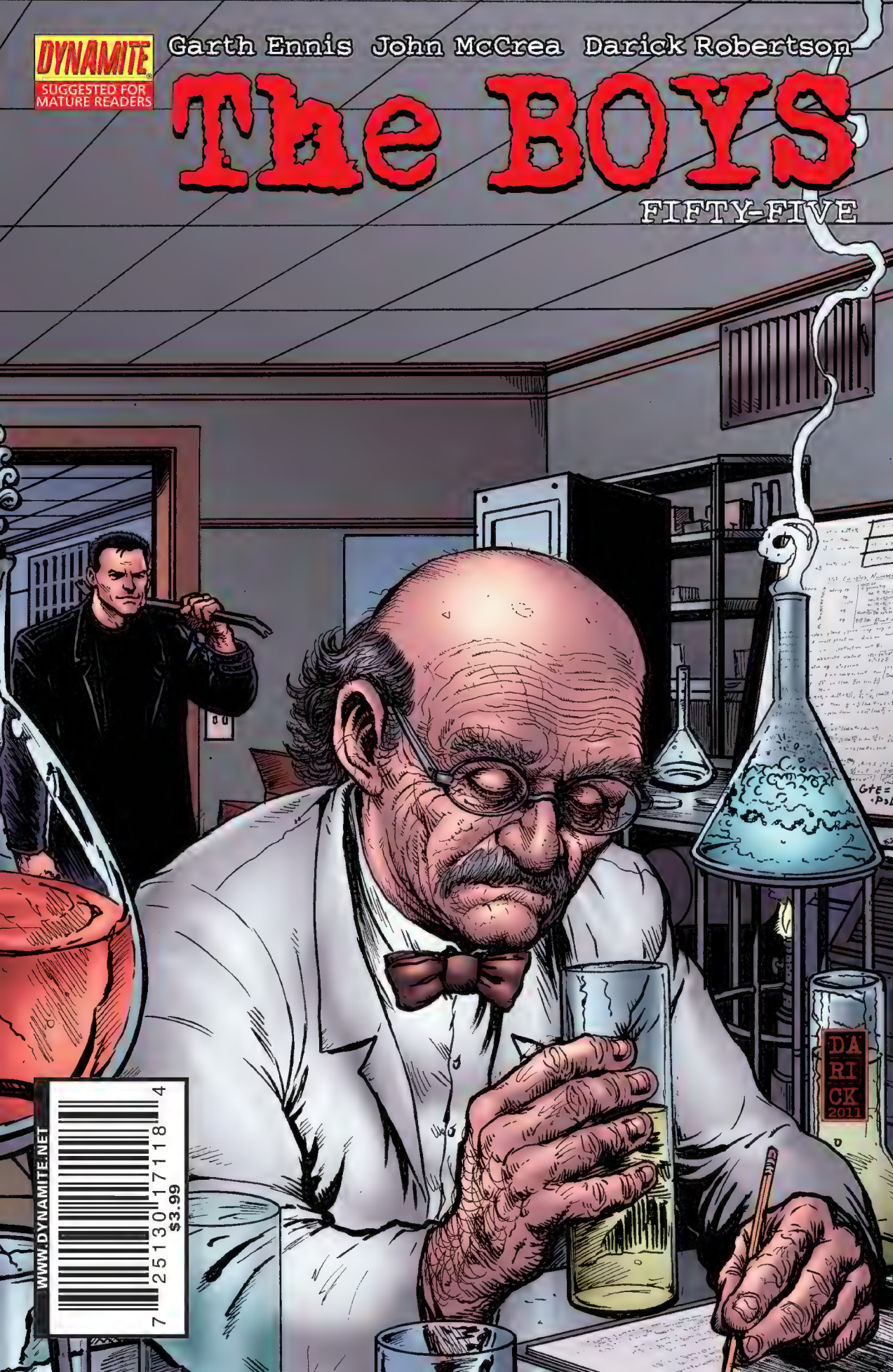
WE'RE THE GREATEST GENERATION, KID. WHISKEY AND IRON AND GUTS AND GLORY.

BESIDES, I WAS RIGHT. HE WAS BACK INSIDE A YEAR, AND TWO YEARS AFTER THAT HE WAS DIRECTOR OF THE AGENCY: BODIES BURIED AND SKELETONS SHUT AWAY.

I'D BEEN QUIET, LETTING HIM COOL DOWN. BUT I PICKED MY MOMENT AND MADE MY PITCH.


"WE'D NEVER HAVE OUR ARMY OF SUPES, WE JUST COULDN'T AFFORD IT--AND WE COULDN'T ANNOUNCE WHAT WE DID HAVE, EITHER, OR CONGRESS WOULD HANG, DRAW AND QUARTER US OVER WHAT WE'D SPENT. BUT WE *COULD* HAVE OPERATIVES TO *OPPOSE* SUPES, AND THE WAY THINGS WERE MOVING, WE WERE GOING TO NEED THEM.
"THIS WAS AROUND EIGHTY-FIVE, AND VOUGHT HAD ADDED THE G-MEN TO THE ROSTER. ALL MANNER OF OTHERS, TOO, THEY SHOWED NO SIGN OF SLOWING DOWN."
"I KNEW WHAT THEY WERE SELLING. SO DID RICK. AND WE KNEW IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE WIND CHANGED, AND THEY BOUGHT THE VOTES THEY NEEDED ON THE HILL.
"SO MY PITCH WAS A TEAM. CREATED TO DO ONE JOB AND ONE JOB ONLY, AIMED LIKE A BULLET AT THE HEART OF THE VOUGHT-AMERICAN SUPERHUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. WE WOULD MANAGE, WE WOULD POLICE, WE WOULD LIQUIDATE WHEN NECESSARY.
"WE WOULD NEVER LET THEM GET COMFORTABLE ENOUGH TO BEGIN THE NEXT STAGE OF THEIR AGENDA."
"THE TINY RESERVE OF ONE-SHOT V THAT WE DID HAVE WOULD BE USED TO EMPOWER OUR OPERATIVES. FOR WHICH, OF COURSE, WE NEEDED A GUINEA PIG."

SOMEBODY HAD TO BE FIRST.
BUT...
DID YOU NO' SAY THAT TEAMS WEREN'T REALLY THE WAY TO GO? 'CAUSE OF ALL THE WAYS THEY CAN TURN OUT WRONG?
I DID.
I DID INDEED.
BUT HINDSIGHT'S ALWAYS TWENTY-TWENTY, ISN'T IT?
I STARTED LOOKING FOR LIKELY CANDIDATES, AND IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE I FIRST RAN ACROSS BUTCHER.
next: OUTSIDE IN THE COLD DISTANCE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FIFTY-FIVE

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in The Boys.

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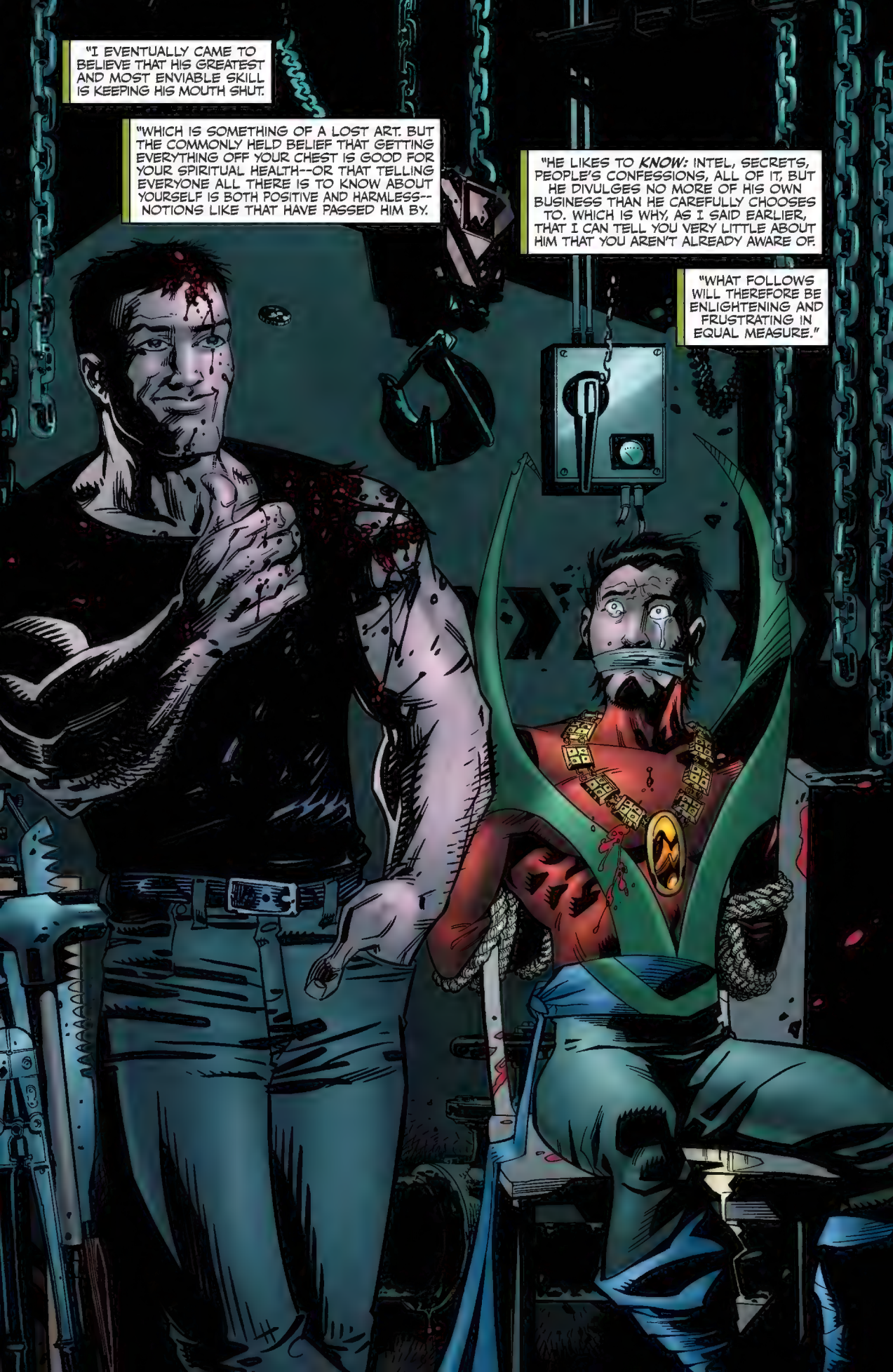
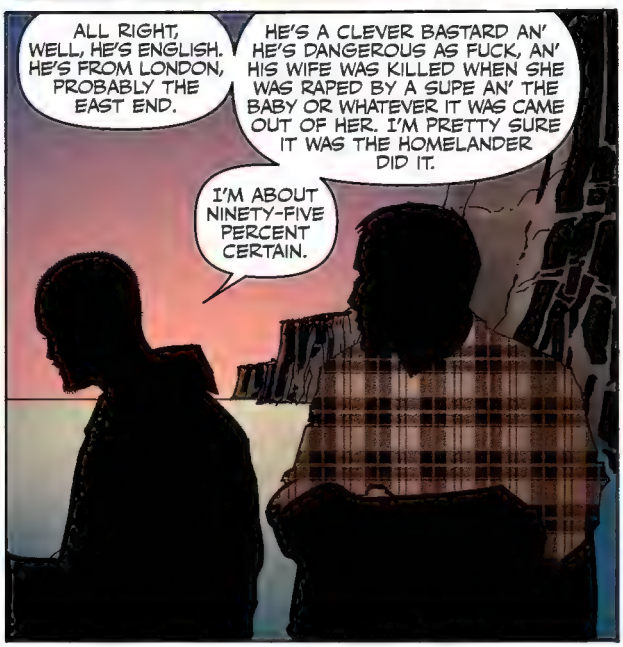

"I EVENTUALLY CAME TO BELIEVE THAT HIS GREATEST AND MOST ENVIABLE SKILL IS KEEPING HIS MOUTH SHUT.
"WHICH IS SOMETHING OF A LOST ART. BUT THE COMMONLY HELD BELIEF THAT GETTING EVERYTHING OFF YOUR CHEST IS GOOD FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH--OR THAT TELLING EVERYONE ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT YOURSELF IS BOTH POSITIVE AND HARMLESS--NOTIONS LIKE THAT HAVE PASSED HIM BY.
"HE LIKES TO *KNOW:* INTEL, SECRETS, PEOPLE'S CONFESSIONS, ALL OF IT, BUT HE DIVULGES NO MORE OF HIS OWN BUSINESS THAN HE CAREFULLY CHOOSES TO. WHICH IS WHY, AS I SAID EARLIER, THAT I CAN TELL YOU VERY LITTLE ABOUT HIM THAT YOU AREN'T ALREADY AWARE OF.
"WHAT FOLLOWS WILL THEREFORE BE ENLIGHTENING AND FRUSTRATING IN EQUAL MEASURE."

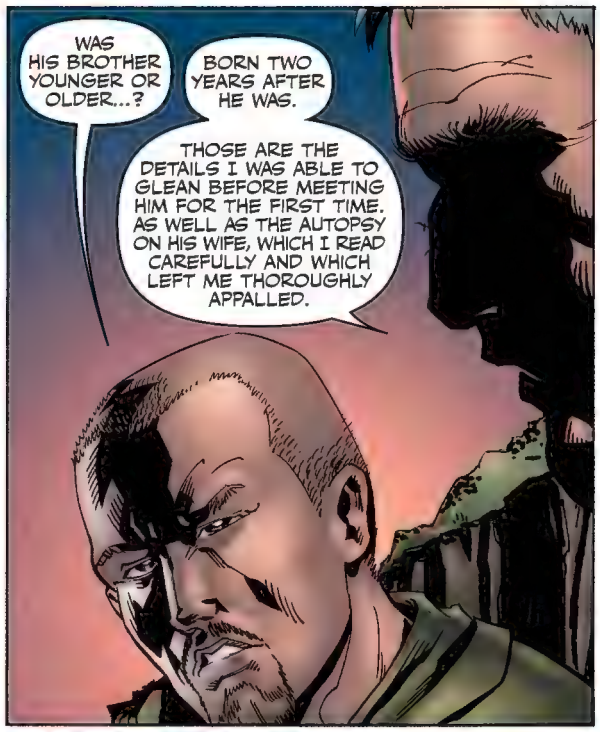
HE TOLD ME ABOUT HIS WIFE NEARLY STRAIGHT AWAY...
NEITHER THE MANNER NOR THE TIMING OF HIS TELLING YOU SERVED HIS AGENDA ONE IOTA?
GTX
GTX
3-IN-ONE

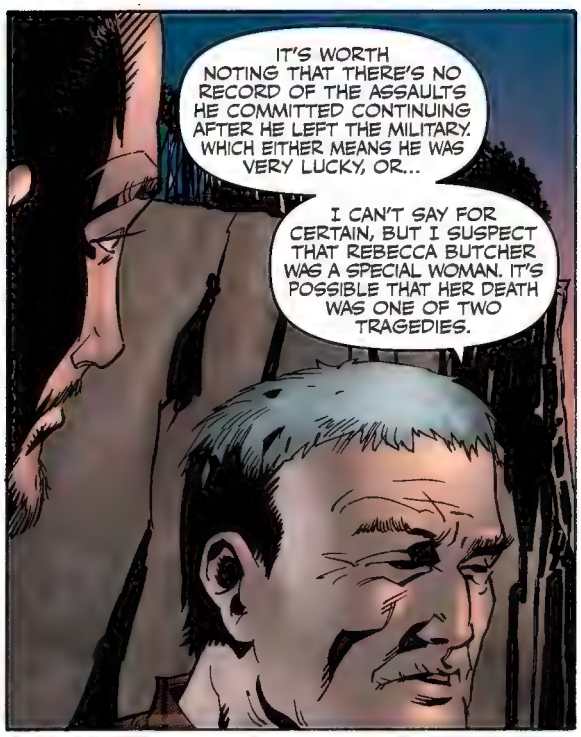
WELL... I SUPPOSE...
IT WAS WHEN I WAS TELLIN' HIM I DIDN'T THINK I COULD JOIN THE...
WHAT ELSE DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HIM?

WELL, I KNOW HE WAS IN THE ARMY, FOR STARTERS.
NO, THE ROYAL MARINES. BE AS PRECISE AS YOU CAN.


ALL RIGHT, WELL, HE'S ENGLISH. HE'S FROM LONDON, PROBABLY THE EAST END.
HE'S A CLEVER BASTARD AN' HE'S DANGEROUS AS FUCK, AN' HIS WIFE WAS KILLED WHEN SHE WAS RAPED BY A SUPE AN' THE BABY OR WHATEVER IT WAS CAME OUT OF HER. I'M PRETTY SURE IT WAS THE HOMELANDER DID IT.
I'M ABOUT NINETY-FIVE PERCENT CERTAIN.

IT WAS.
LONDON'S CORRECT, HE WAS BORN THERE IN NINETEEN SIXTY-FIVE. HE JOINED THE MARINES AT THE AGE OF SIXTEEN AND FOUGHT IN THE FALKLANDS WAR A YEAR LATER. HE WAS WOUNDED AND SUBSEQUENTLY COURT-MARTIALLED FOR THE WORST OF A SERIES OF VIOLENT ASSAULTS, WHICH BEGAN NOT LONG AFTER HIS RECOVERY.
ONE BROTHER, DIED IN AN ACCIDENT AGED NINETEEN. MOTHER DIED RECENTLY. FATHER STILL ALIVE.


WAS HIS BROTHER YOUNGER OR OLDER...?
BORN TWO YEARS AFTER HE WAS.
THOSE ARE THE DETAILS I WAS ABLE TO GLEAN BEFORE MEETING HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME. AS WELL AS THE AUTOPSY ON HIS WIFE, WHICH I READ CAREFULLY AND WHICH LEFT ME THOROUGHLY APPALLED.


IT'S WORTH NOTING THAT THERE'S NO RECORD OF THE ASSAULTS HE COMMITTED CONTINUING AFTER HE LEFT THE MILITARY. WHICH EITHER MEANS HE WAS VERY LUCKY, OR...
I CAN'T SAY FOR CERTAIN, BUT I SUSPECT THAT REBECCA BUTCHER WAS A SPECIAL WOMAN. IT'S POSSIBLE THAT HER DEATH WAS ONE OF TWO TRAGEDIES.

HMM.
WHY DID YOU WANT HIM? I MEAN WHAT WAS IT ABOUT HIM IN PARTICULAR, LIKE?
SAME REASON HE WANTED YOU. YOU'D FELT IT.

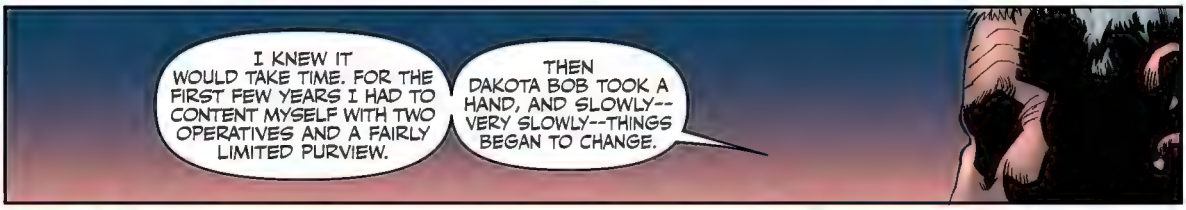
SUPERHUMANS HAD KILLED OR RUINED SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU. THEY'D SMASHED YOUR LIFE.
AS THEY HAD HIS, AS THEY HAD MINE.

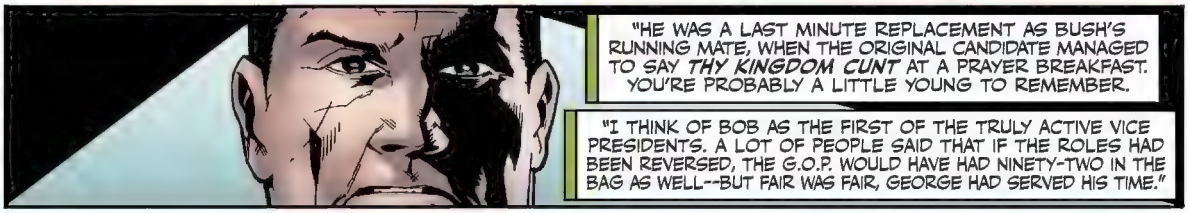
I WANTED PEOPLE WHO HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO BE *INVOLVED*.

"NO *IT'S JUST A JOB.*

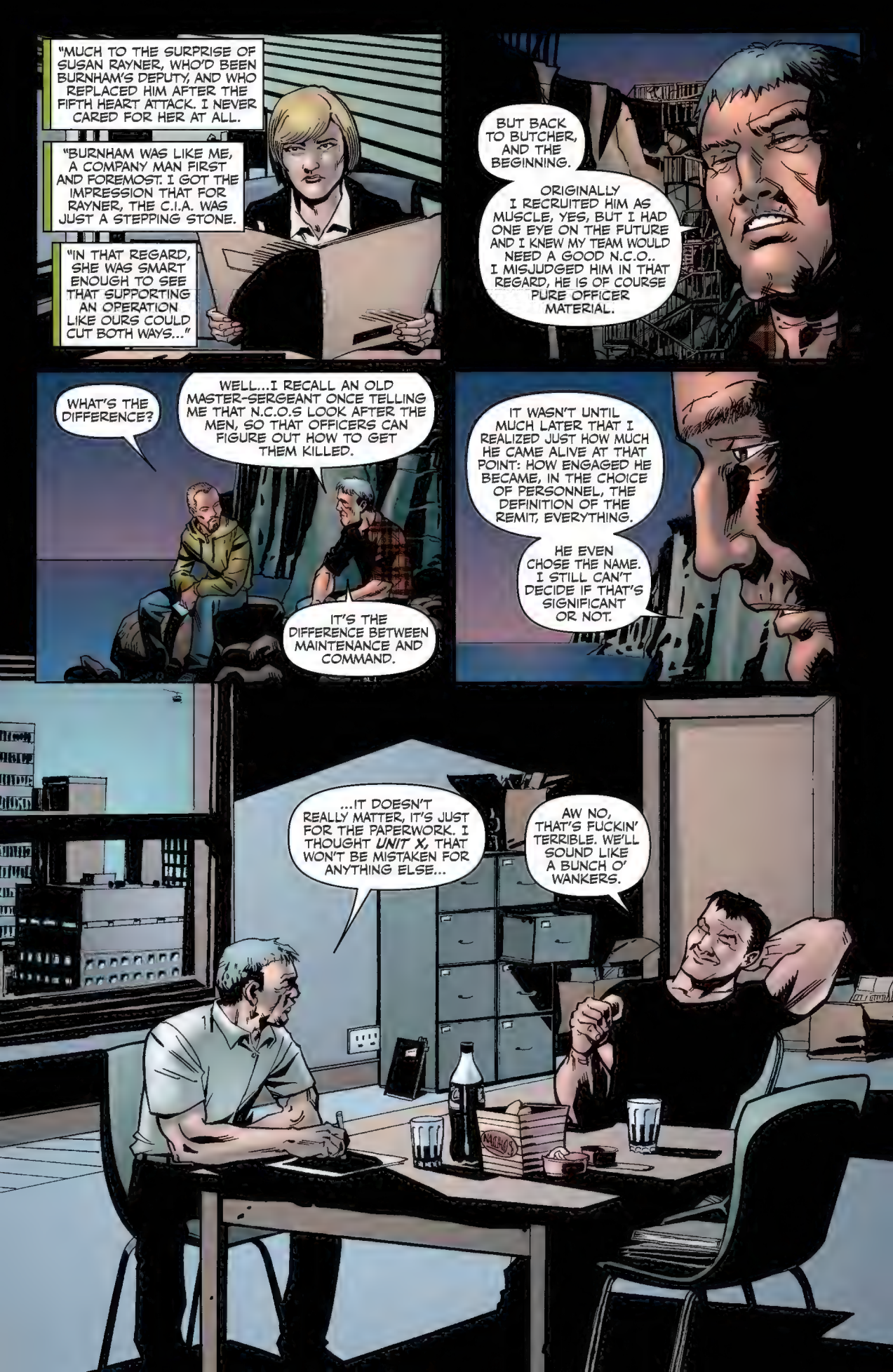
"NO *I DON'T TAKE IT HOME WITH ME.*

"I WANTED PEOPLE WHO LIVED, BREATHED, ATE AND DREAMED THIS THING."





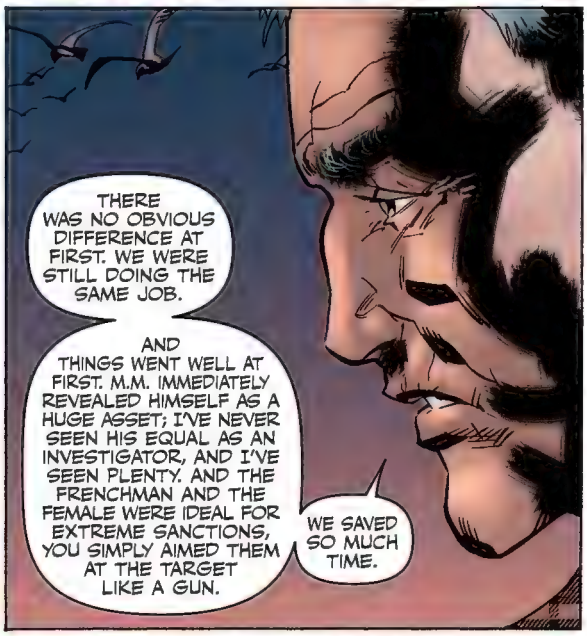
"NOW, AS A HIRELING OF VARIOUS SPECIAL INTERESTS--THE SAME ONES I ALERTED TO VOGELBAUM'S WHEREABOUTS--BOB WANTED VOUGHT-AMERICAN'S AGENDA TORPEDOED. AS SOON AS WORD REACHED THE AGENCY, RICK GOT US IN TO SEE HIM.
"HIS SUPPORT COULD NEVER BE PUBLIC, OF COURSE, BUT THEN WHAT WE WERE DOING COULDN'T BE PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGED TO BEGIN WITH. BUT HE COULD SMOOTH THE WAY FOR US, KEEP US OUT OF THE LIMELIGHT..."
HANG ON, IT DIDN'T BOTHER YOU THAT YOU WERE JUST CARRYIN' OUT THESE OTHER WANKERS' AGENDA? THESE FUCKIN' CORPORATE PRICKS?
WHAT CAN I SAY, HUGHIE.
"ARE YOU TURNING INTO SOME KIND OF SOCIALIST NOW...?"
"WHAT BOB BEGAN, CLINTON CONTINUED. HE HAD BACKERS OF HIS OWN TO SERVE.
"OF COURSE, THE TROUBLE WITH SUPPORT FROM POLITICIANS IS THAT THE PRESSURES OF PUBLIC LIFE FORCE THEM TO BLOW HOT AND COLD. WE HAD MORE THAN ONE GREEN LIGHT TURN RED IN MID-OPERATION. YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW THAT WENT DOWN.
"TWO ACCIDENTAL MONICA LEWINSKY REFERENCES THERE, BUT SHE DID INADVERTANTLY COST US DEAR."
HO HO HO. SO THAT MUST MEAN BUTCHER AN' BOB'RE STILL IN TOUCH, THEN. THEY HAVE BEEN ALL ALONG.
VERY, VERY DISCRETELY, AND I IMAGINE BOB'S THE ONE WHO INITIATES WHAT FEW CONTACTS THERE ARE. BUT YES, BOB GOT IN TOUCH IN TWO THOUSAND AND ONE, ALMOST AS SOON AS HE RETURNED TO THE WHITE HOUSE.
AND IT WOULD HAVE BEEN HIM WHO GOT THINGS GOING AGAIN A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO; I IMAGINE THE AGENCY RECEIVED THE DIRECTIVE JUST BEFORE YOU APPEARED ON THE SCENE.


"MUCH TO THE SURPRISE OF SUSAN RAYNER, WHO'D BEEN BURNHAM'S DEPUTY, AND WHO REPLACED HIM AFTER THE FIFTH HEART ATTACK. I NEVER CARED FOR HER AT ALL.
"BURNHAM WAS LIKE ME, A COMPANY MAN FIRST AND FOREMOST. I GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT FOR RAYNER, THE C.I.A. WAS JUST A STEPPING STONE.
"IN THAT REGARD, SHE WAS SMART ENOUGH TO SEE THAT SUPPORTING AN OPERATION LIKE OURS COULD CUT BOTH WAYS..."
BUT BACK TO BUTCHER, AND THE BEGINNING.
ORIGINALLY I RECRUITED HIM AS MUSCLE, YES, BUT I HAD ONE EYE ON THE FUTURE AND I KNEW MY TEAM WOULD NEED A GOOD N.C.O.. I MISJUDGED HIM IN THAT REGARD, HE IS OF COURSE PURE OFFICER MATERIAL.
WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?
WELL...I RECALL AN OLD MASTER-SERGEANT ONCE TELLING ME THAT N.C.O.S LOOK AFTER THE MEN, SO THAT OFFICERS CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET THEM KILLED.
IT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAINTENANCE AND COMMAND.
IT WASN'T UNTIL MUCH LATER THAT I REALIZED JUST HOW MUCH HE CAME ALIVE AT THAT POINT: HOW ENGAGED HE BECAME, IN THE CHOICE OF PERSONNEL, THE DEFINITION OF THE REMIT, EVERYTHING.
HE EVEN CHOSE THE NAME. I STILL CAN'T DECIDE IF THAT'S SIGNIFICANT OR NOT.
...IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER, IT'S JUST FOR THE PAPERWORK. I THOUGHT *UNIT X*, THAT WON'T BE MISTAKEN FOR ANYTHING ELSE...
AW NO, THAT'S FUCKIN' TERRIBLE. WE'LL SOUND LIKE A BUNCH O' WANKERS.

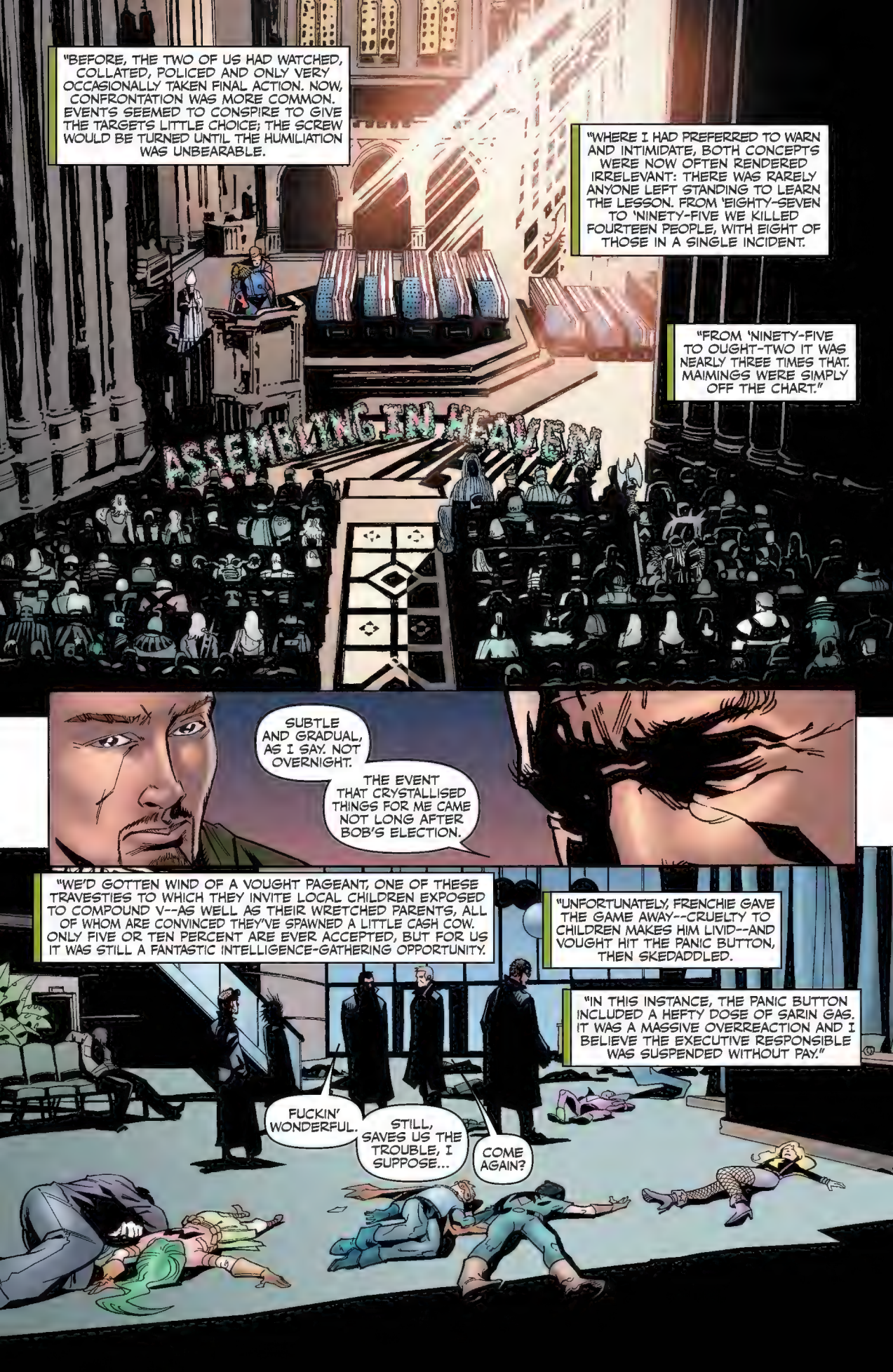
YOU HAVE ANOTHER SUGGESTION?
WELL--*MMF*--WHERE I COME FROM, WHEN SOMEBODY WANTS SOMEONE DONE OVER, THEY TALK ABOUT SENDIN' THE BOYS ROUND. "HARRY'S TURNED INTO A RIGHT MOUTHY TWAT, I'M GONNA SEND THE BOYS ROUND." YEAH?

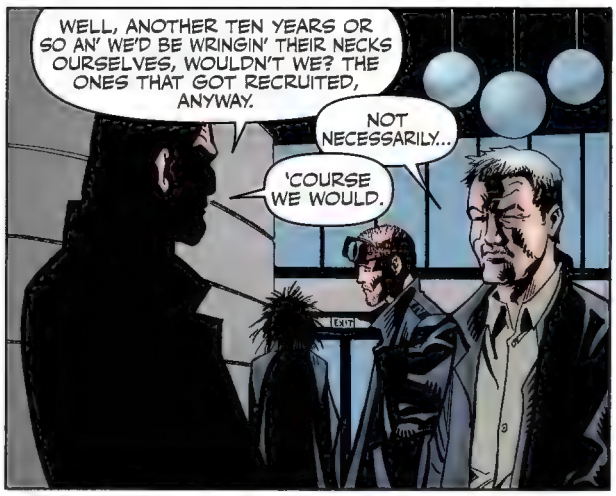
WHO'S THEY?
WHOEVER WANTS HARRY'S LEGS BROKEN.
WHO ARE THE BOYS?
WHOEVER THEY SEND TO BREAK 'EM.
YOU WANT THE LAST TACO THERE? TA.
NACHO'S

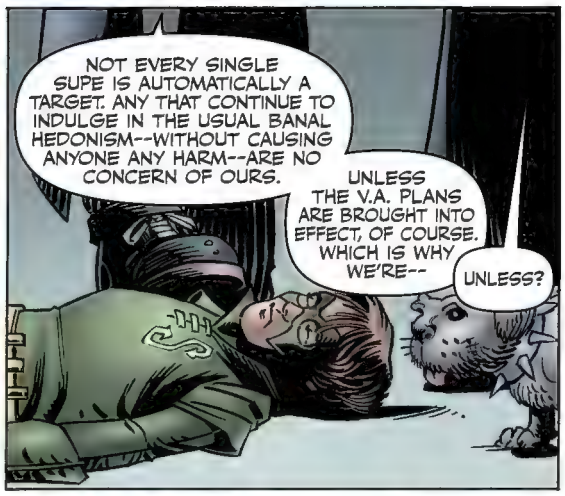
AN' THAT WAS IT?
IF YOU WERE EXPECTING A SECRET ORIGIN, YOU CAME TO THE WRONG PLACE.
WE GATHERED THE OTHERS AND WENT TO WORK.


THERE WAS NO OBVIOUS DIFFERENCE AT FIRST. WE WERE STILL DOING THE SAME JOB.
AND THINGS WENT WELL AT FIRST. M.M. IMMEDIATELY REVEALED HIMSELF AS A HUGE ASSET; I'VE NEVER SEEN HIS EQUAL AS AN INVESTIGATOR, AND I'VE SEEN PLENTY. AND THE FRENCHMAN AND THE FEMALE WERE IDEAL FOR EXTREME SANCTIONS, YOU SIMPLY AIMED THEM AT THE TARGET LIKE A GUN.
WE SAVED SO MUCH TIME.

THE DIFFERENCE... WHEN I DID BECOME AWARE OF IT...WAS BOTH SUBTLE AND GRADUAL.


"BEFORE, THE TWO OF US HAD WATCHED, COLLATED, POLICED AND ONLY VERY OCCASIONALLY TAKEN FINAL ACTION. NOW, CONFRONTATION WAS MORE COMMON. EVENTS SEEMED TO CONSPIRE TO GIVE THE TARGETS LITTLE CHOICE; THE SCREW WOULD BE TURNED UNTIL THE HUMILIATION WAS UNBEARABLE.
"WHERE I HAD PREFERRED TO WARN AND INTIMIDATE, BOTH CONCEPTS WERE NOW OFTEN RENDERED IRRELEVANT: THERE WAS RARELY ANYONE LEFT STANDING TO LEARN THE LESSON. FROM 'EIGHTY-SEVEN TO 'NINETY-FIVE WE KILLED FOURTEEN PEOPLE, WITH EIGHT OF THOSE IN A SINGLE INCIDENT.
"FROM 'NINETY-FIVE TO OUGHT-TWO IT WAS NEARLY THREE TIMES THAT. MAIMINGS WERE SIMPLY OFF THE CHART."
ASSEMBLING IN HEAVEN
SUBTLE AND GRADUAL, AS I SAY. NOT OVERNIGHT.
THE EVENT THAT CRYSTALLISED THINGS FOR ME CAME NOT LONG AFTER BOB'S ELECTION.
"WE'D GOTTEN WIND OF A VOUGHT PAGEANT, ONE OF THESE TRAVESTIES TO WHICH THEY INVITE LOCAL CHILDREN EXPOSED TO COMPOUND V--AS WELL AS THEIR WRETCHED PARENTS, ALL OF WHOM ARE CONVINCED THEY'VE SPAWNED A LITTLE CASH COW. ONLY FIVE OR TEN PERCENT ARE EVER ACCEPTED, BUT FOR US IT WAS STILL A FANTASTIC INTELLIGENCE-GATHERING OPPORTUNITY.
"UNFORTUNATELY, FRENCHIE GAVE THE GAME AWAY--CRUELTY TO CHILDREN MAKES HIM LIVID--AND VOUGHT HIT THE PANIC BUTTON, THEN SKEDADDLED.
"IN THIS INSTANCE, THE PANIC BUTTON INCLUDED A HEFTY DOSE OF SARIN GAS. IT WAS A MASSIVE OVERREACTION AND I BELIEVE THE EXECUTIVE RESPONSIBLE WAS SUSPENDED WITHOUT PAY."
FUCKIN' WONDERFUL.
STILL, SAVES US THE TROUBLE, I SUPPOSE...
COME AGAIN?


WELL, ANOTHER TEN YEARS OR SO AN' WE'D BE WRINGIN' THEIR NECKS OURSELVES, WOULDN'T WE? THE ONES THAT GOT RECRUITED, ANYWAY.
NOT NECESSARILY...
'COURSE WE WOULD.
EXIT


NOT EVERY SINGLE SUPE IS AUTOMATICALLY A TARGET. ANY THAT CONTINUE TO INDULGE IN THE USUAL BANAL HEDONISM--WITHOUT CAUSING ANYONE ANY HARM--ARE NO CONCERN OF OURS.
UNLESS THE V.A. PLANS ARE BROUGHT INTO EFFECT, OF COURSE. WHICH IS WHY WE'RE--
UNLESS?

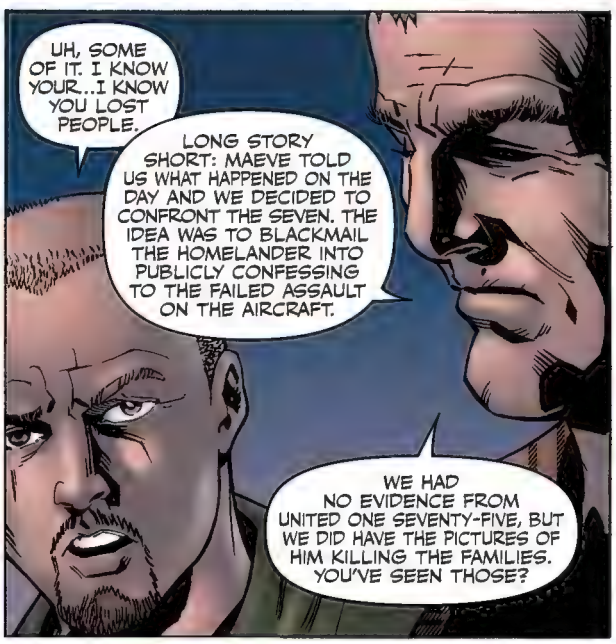
WELL, THAT DAY IS OBVIOUSLY BOUND TO COME. BUT BY THE TIME IT DOES, THE INTELLIGENCE WE'VE COLLATED WILL HAVE ENABLED US TO IDENTIFY AND NEUTRALIZE MOST OF THE POTENTIAL THREATS IN ADVANCE...
I'LL TELL YOU HOW YOU NEUTRALIZE THE POTENTIAL THREATS: YOU FUCKIN' DROP THE LOT O' THEM. EVERY SINGLE ARSEHOLE IN TIGHTS, YOU DO 'EM.

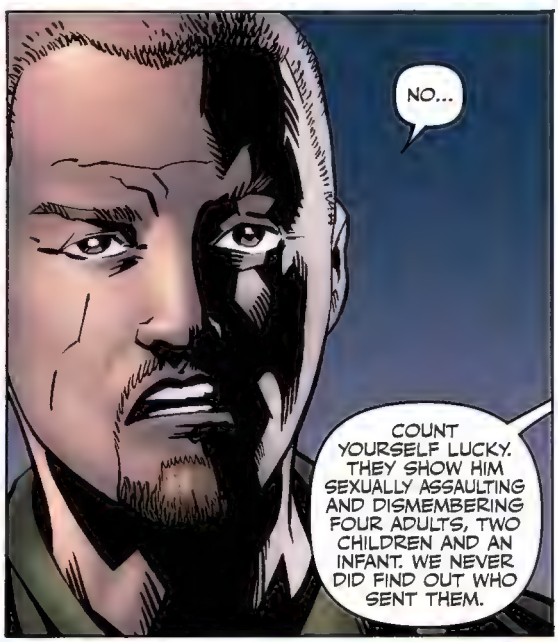
AND HOW EXACTLY DO YOU PROPOSE TO COMMIT THIS PARTICULAR GENOCIDE...?
WELL, YOU CAN'T, CAN YOU? I'M TALKIN' ABOUT IN AN IDEAL WORLD.
BUT YOU WOULD IF YOU COULD?
BLEEDIN' RIGHT I WOULD. NO ONE SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO WALK AROUND WITH WHAT THEY'VE GOT, IT'S JUST TOO MUCH OF A RISK.

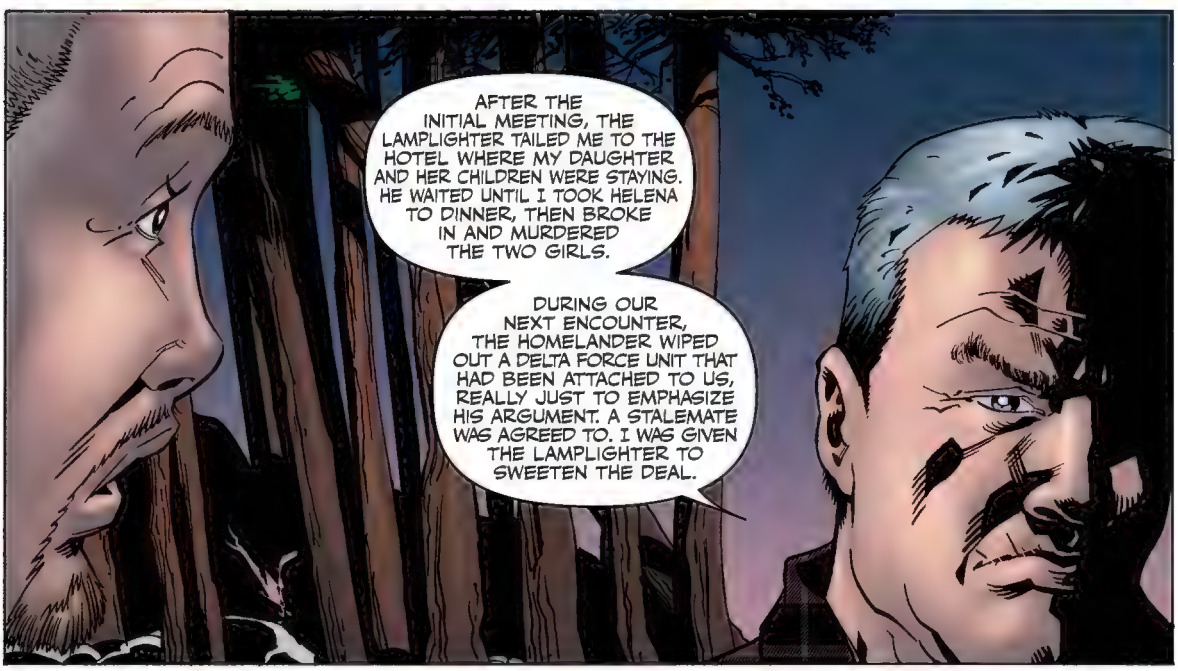
AS THE OLD SAYIN' GOES: WITH GREAT POWER COMES THE TOTAL FUCKIN' CERTAINTY THAT YOU'RE GONNA TURN INTO A CUNT.

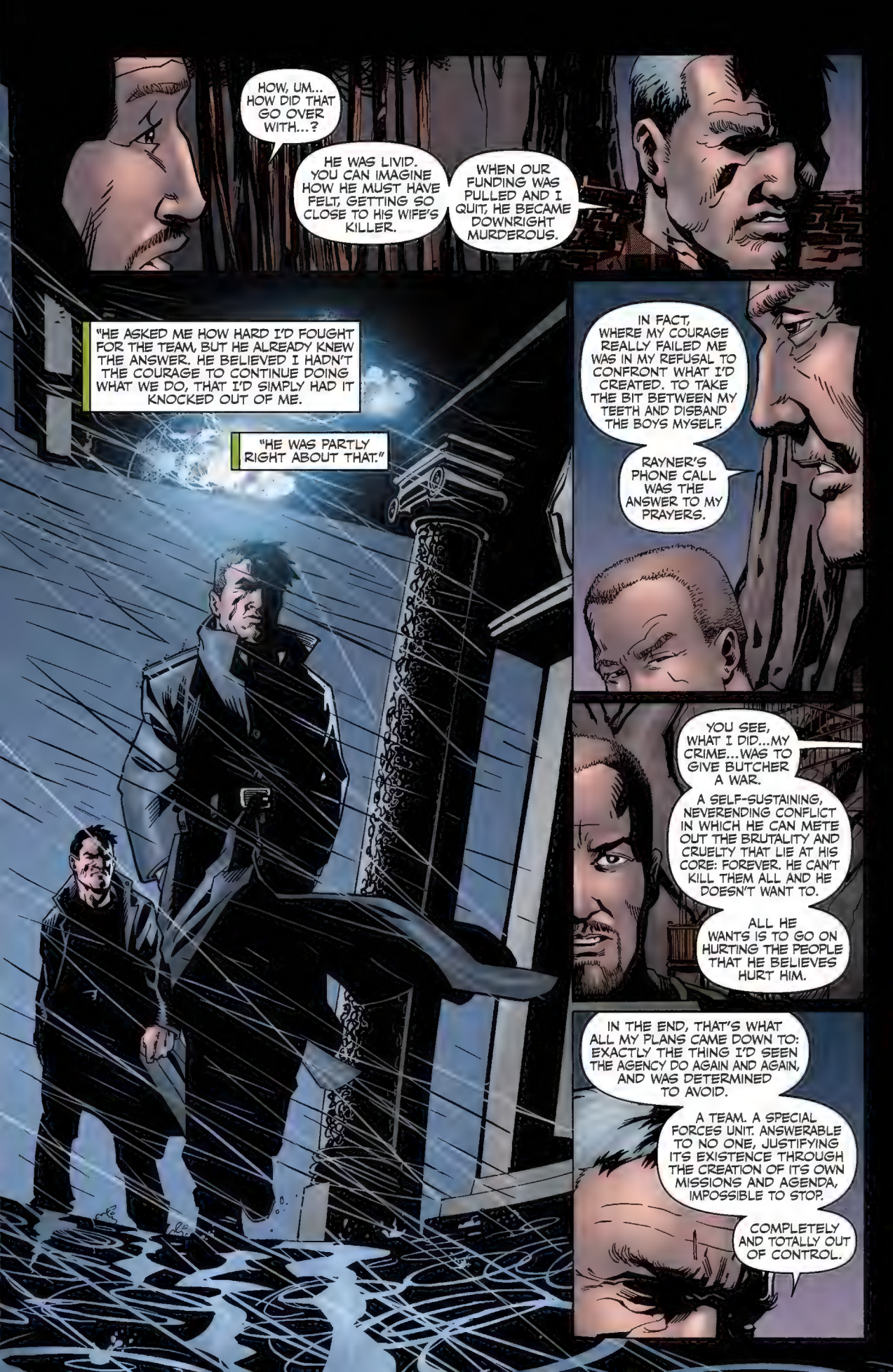
YOU THINK HE REALLY WANTS TO...
NO. HE HASN'T DIVORCED HIMSELF FROM REALITY.
I THINK HE ALREADY HAS EXACTLY WHAT HE WANTS, AND WHAT BOTHERS ME IS THAT I GAVE IT TO HIM.

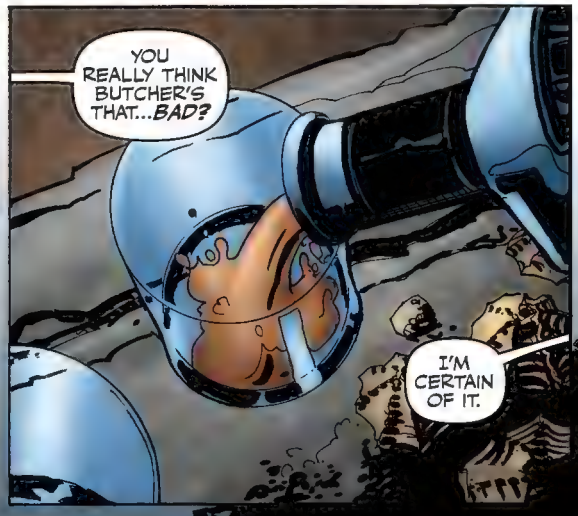
I SPENT THE NEXT YEAR UNWILLING TO ADMIT IT, IF I'M HONEST. THEN CAME NINE-ELEVEN, AND EVIDENCE OF THE SEVEN'S INVOLVEMENT, AND AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGMENT I ALLOWED MYSELF TO BE...
YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED IN THAT PARTICULAR DEBACLE, DON'T YOU?


UH, SOME OF IT. I KNOW YOUR...I KNOW YOU LOST PEOPLE.
LONG STORY SHORT: MAEVE TOLD US WHAT HAPPENED ON THE DAY AND WE DECIDED TO CONFRONT THE SEVEN. THE IDEA WAS TO BLACKMAIL THE HOMELANDER INTO PUBLICLY CONFESSING TO THE FAILED ASSAULT ON THE AIRCRAFT.
WE HAD NO EVIDENCE FROM UNITED ONE SEVENTY-FIVE, BUT WE DID HAVE THE PICTURES OF HIM KILLING THE FAMILIES. YOU'VE SEEN THOSE?


NO...
COUNT YOURSELF LUCKY. THEY SHOW HIM SEXUALLY ASSAULTING AND DISMEMBERING FOUR ADULTS, TWO CHILDREN AND AN INFANT. WE NEVER DID FIND OUT WHO SENT THEM.


AFTER THE INITIAL MEETING, THE LAMPLIGHTER TAILED ME TO THE HOTEL WHERE MY DAUGHTER AND HER CHILDREN WERE STAYING. HE WAITED UNTIL I TOOK HELENA TO DINNER, THEN BROKE IN AND MURDERED THE TWO GIRLS.
DURING OUR NEXT ENCOUNTER, THE HOMELANDER WIPED OUT A DELTA FORCE UNIT THAT HAD BEEN ATTACHED TO US, REALLY JUST TO EMPHASIZE HIS ARGUMENT. A STALEMATE WAS AGREED TO. I WAS GIVEN THE LAMPLIGHTER TO SWEETEN THE DEAL.


HOW, UM... HOW DID THAT GO OVER WITH...?
HE WAS LIVID. YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW HE MUST HAVE FELT, GETTING SO CLOSE TO HIS WIFE'S KILLER.
WHEN OUR FUNDING WAS PULLED AND I QUIT, HE BECAME DOWNRIGHT MURDEROUS.
"HE ASKED ME HOW HARD I'D FOUGHT FOR THE TEAM, BUT HE ALREADY KNEW THE ANSWER. HE BELIEVED I HADN'T THE COURAGE TO CONTINUE DOING WHAT WE DO, THAT I'D SIMPLY HAD IT KNOCKED OUT OF ME.
"HE WAS PARTLY RIGHT ABOUT THAT."
IN FACT, WHERE MY COURAGE REALLY FAILED ME WAS IN MY REFUSAL TO CONFRONT WHAT I'D CREATED. TO TAKE THE BIT BETWEEN MY TEETH AND DISBAND THE BOYS MYSELF.
RAYNER'S PHONE CALL WAS THE ANSWER TO MY PRAYERS.
YOU SEE, WHAT I DID...MY CRIME...WAS TO GIVE BUTCHER A WAR.
A SELF-SUSTAINING, NEVERENDING CONFLICT IN WHICH HE CAN METE OUT THE BRUTALITY AND CRUELTY THAT LIE AT HIS CORE: FOREVER. HE CAN'T KILL THEM ALL AND HE DOESN'T WANT TO.
ALL HE WANTS IS TO GO ON HURTING THE PEOPLE THAT HE BELIEVES HURT HIM.
IN THE END, THAT'S WHAT ALL MY PLANS CAME DOWN TO: EXACTLY THE THING I'D SEEN THE AGENCY DO AGAIN AND AGAIN, AND WAS DETERMINED TO AVOID.
A TEAM. A SPECIAL FORCES UNIT. ANSWERABLE TO NO ONE, JUSTIFYING ITS EXISTENCE THROUGH THE CREATION OF ITS OWN MISSIONS AND AGENDA, IMPOSSIBLE TO STOP.
COMPLETELY AND TOTALLY OUT OF CONTROL.

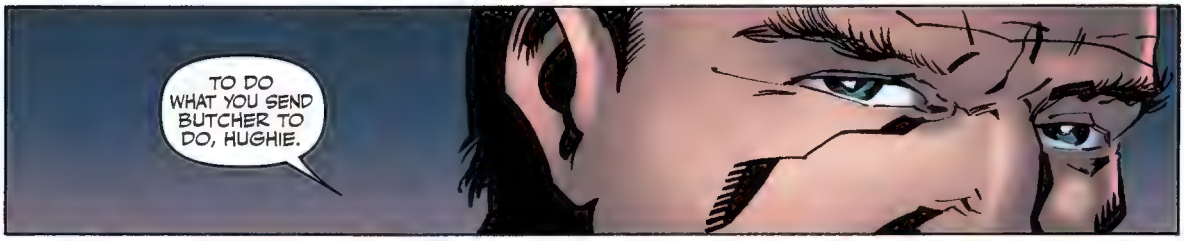


"THERE WAS A LOOSE END I'D NEVER BEEN COMFORTABLE WITH, AND THAT WAS VOGELBAUM HIMSELF. THE THOUGHT OF CIRCUMSTANCES TAKING HIM BEYOND MY CONTROL, MAYBE MY JUST NOT BEING AROUND TO KEEP AN EYE ON HIM, WAS A CONSTANT WORRY.

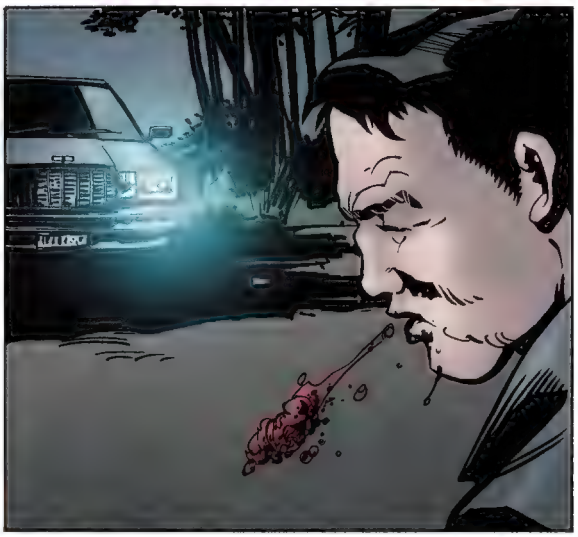
"IF VOUGHT GOT WIND HE WAS STILL ALIVE...OR EVEN IF SOMEONE ON OUR SIDE DID, AND HAD THE BRIGHT IDEA TO MAKE OUR OWN SUPES--AN OLD CHESTNUT, BUT ALWAYS WORTH CONSIDERING...

"NOT LONG AFTER WE FORMED THE TEAM I DECIDED IT WASN'T WORTH THE RISK. WE HAD OUR SUPPLY OF V, WE DIDN'T EVEN NEED VOGELBAUM. BUT--"

I STILL DIDN'T QUITE HAVE IT IN ME...SO I SENT BUTCHER INSTEAD.
SENT HIM TO WHAT?
INVITE THE OLD GUY OVER FOR DINNER. MAYBE SING SOME SONGS.


TO DO WHAT YOU SEND BUTCHER TO DO, HUGHIE.

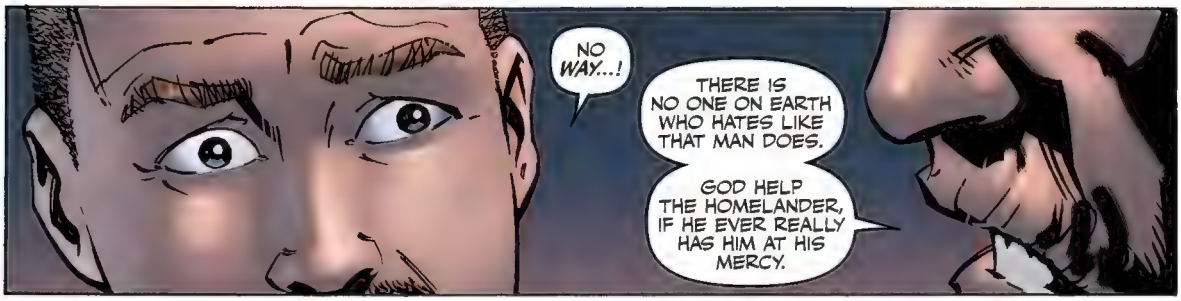
HE WAS DELIGHTED. JUST TO GET HIS HANDS ON THE MAN WHO STARTED IT ALL, WHO INVENTED COMPOUND V--WHO "SHAT THEM OUT IN THE FUCKING FIRST PLACE", HE SAID--
WELL, YOU'VE SEEN HIM SMILE THAT SMILE.



RIGHT THEN.

WHAT'S...?

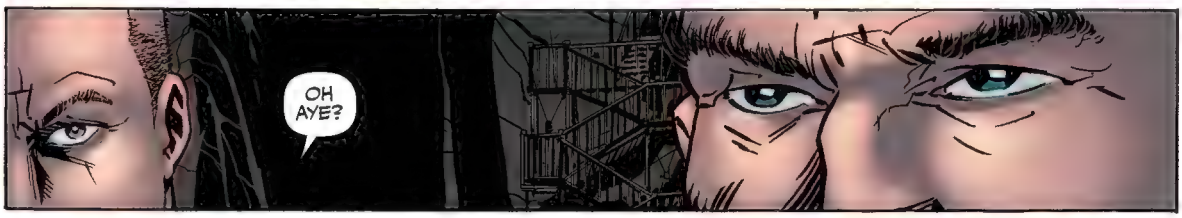
I'M FUCKIN' STARVIN', D'YOU MIND IF WE STOP FOR A BITE TO EAT?


NO WAY...!
THERE IS NO ONE ON EARTH WHO HATES LIKE THAT MAN DOES.
GOD HELP THE HOMELANDER, IF HE EVER REALLY HAS HIM AT HIS MERCY.

SO YES, I THINK HE'S THAT BAD. I THINK HE LOVES EVERY MINUTE OF IT AND HE SEES NO REASON TO STOP.
BURNHAM ONCE COMPARED WHAT WE DO TO THE COLD WAR, BUT *THAT* RELIED ON NEITHER SIDE EVER GOING TOO FAR. THERE WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE SOME FINAL SHOWDOWN IN THE RUINS OF THE KREMLIN, NO ***LET US JUST TAKE OUT REAGAN, JUST HIM...***

THE BOYS AGAINST THE SEVEN...AND BY EXTENSION THE C.I.A. AGAINST VOUGHT-AMERICAN...
THAT'S GOING SOMEWHERE ELSE ENTIRELY.

WHICH IS WHY I WASHED MY HANDS OF THE WHOLE THING, AND CAME OUT HERE.


OH AYE?

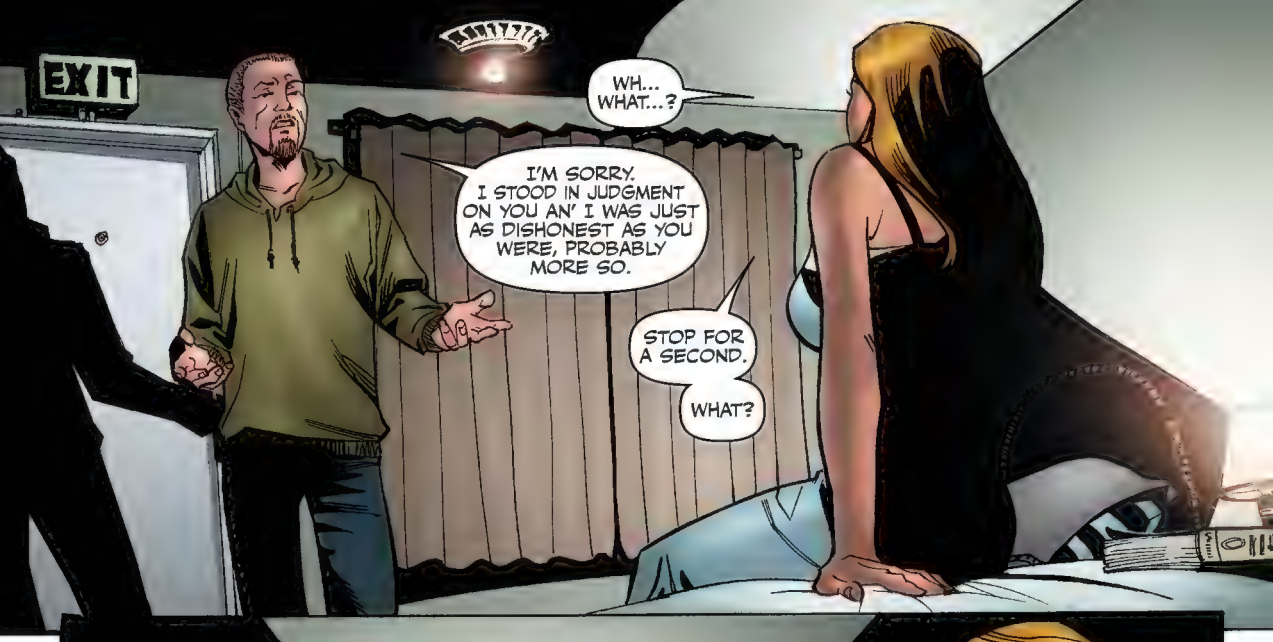
ARE YOU STAYING THE NIGHT?
NO.
D'YOU KNOW SOMETHIN', MISTER MALLORY?
COLONEL MALLORY. I NEVER LEFT THE NATIONAL GUARD.
AYE, WELL WHATEVER.
I THINK YOUR TOUGH OLD BASTARD WAR VETERAN'S AS MUCH OF AN ACT AS YOUR KIND-HEARTED ENGLISH GENTLEMAN. I THINK YOU'RE A FAKE.
REALLY...
I THINK THE REAL THING'S JUST ONE MORE ARROGANT IVY-LEAGUE PRICK WHO THOUGHT HE HAD THE RIGHT TO FUCK AROUND W/' THE WORLD.
I MEAN YOU'RE OUT HERE KIDDIN' YOURSELF YOU'RE A MAN OF HONOR OR WHATEVER, AN' YOUR HANDS ARE CLEAN--AFTER ALL THE BLOODY THINGS YOU'VE DONE? THE SHITE YOU'VE LET LOOSE?
I'M NO' EXACTLY SURE WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT IN ALL THIS, BUT IT LOOKS TO ME LIKE WE'RE TALKIN' ABOUT MORE'N THE ONE MONSTER...
I'D SAY THAT WAS ABOUT ENOUGH.
OH, WHAT IS IT, YOU AN' ME RIGHT HERE? SQUARE GOES?
ARE YOU STILL TRYNNA PRETEND YOU'RE AN AMERICAN SOLDIER, COLONEL?

HMH.
I GUESS THERE'S HOPE FOR YOU YET, BOY.
AYE, WELL YOU JUST SIT OUT HERE ON YOUR COAST.
CARRY ON LOOKIN' THE PAST IN THE EYE AN' FEELIN' CLEAN.

I'M PART OF A TEAM SET UP TO MONITOR SUPERHUMANS. THE PRESIDENT'S WORRIED ABOUT VOUGHT-AMERICAN, ABOUT THEM TRYNNA USE SUPES IN THE DEFENSE INDUSTRY.

I WAS RECRUITED AFTER ROBIN GOT KILLED. I'VE BEEN DOIN' IT ABOUT AS LONG AS YOU'VE BEEN WITH THE SEVEN. WE'RE THE PEOPLE MADE SUCH A MESS O' TEENAGE KIX, WE WERE INVOLVED WI' THE G-MEN AN' PAYBACK GETTIN' WIPED OUT.

I KILLED THE BLARNEY COCK MYSELF, IF THE TRUTH BE TOLD.

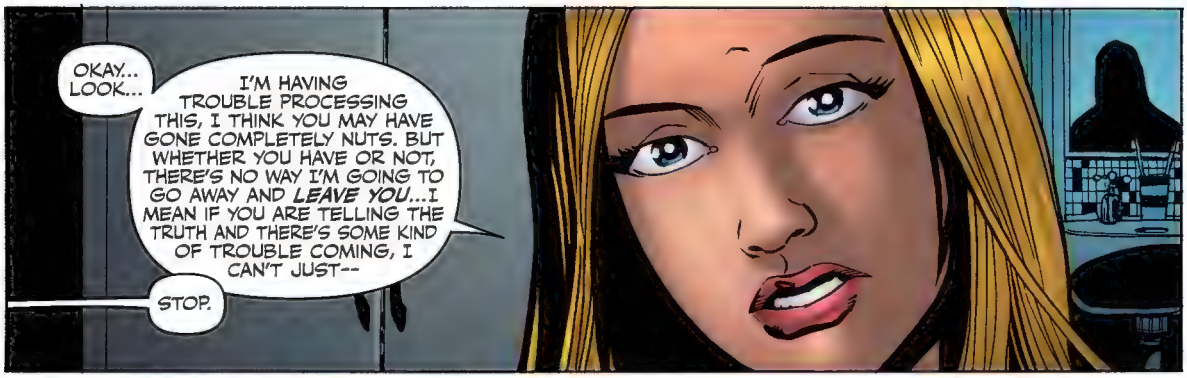

EXIT
WH... WHAT...?
I'M SORRY. I STOOD IN JUDGMENT ON YOU AN' I WAS JUST AS DISHONEST AS YOU WERE, PROBABLY MORE SO.
STOP FOR A SECOND.
WHAT?

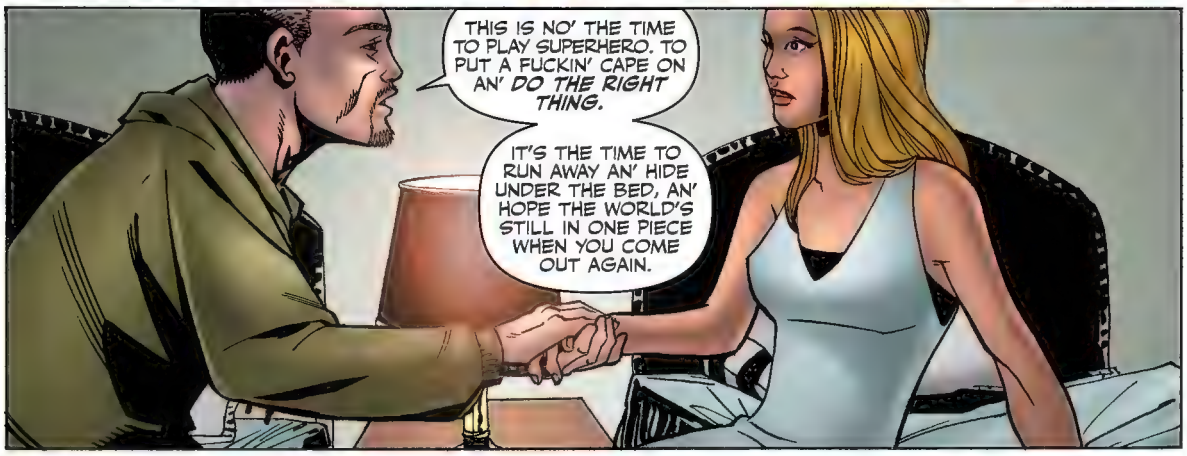
I'M--
IN THE C.I.A.?
AYE.

I'M SORRY TO JUST TELL YOU LIKE THIS, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE WAY I LOST THE HEAD WHEN YOU CAME CLEAN WI' ME. BUT YOU DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH.
AN' NOW THAT I'VE TOLD YOU, I NEED YOU TO PROMISE YOU'LL DO SOMETHIN' FOR ME.

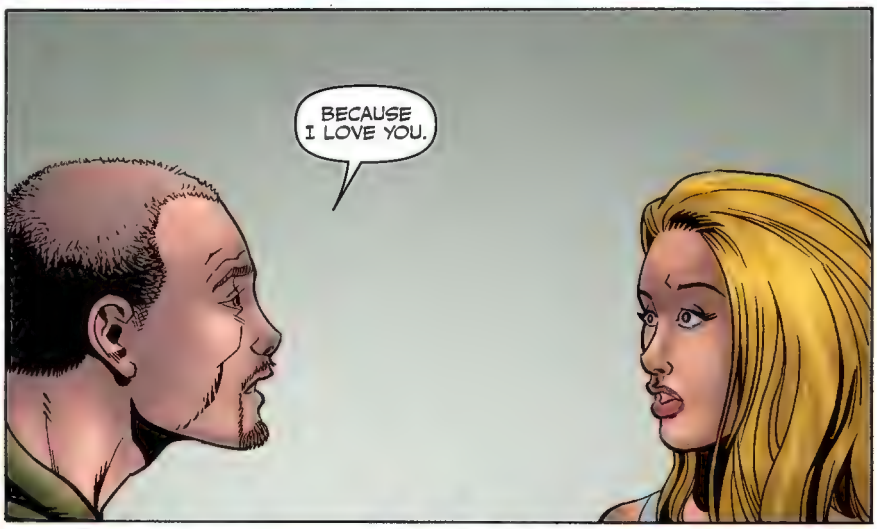
I WANT YOU TO GET AS FAR AWAY FROM ME AS YOU CAN. DON'T GO ANYWHERE NEAR THE SEVEN. DON'T EVEN GO BACK TO NEW YORK.
JUST STAY AWAY AN' STAY HIDDEN UNTIL EVERYTHING'S FINALLY OVER AN' DONE WI'.

I CAN'T JUST--THIS IS CRAZY--
WAIT A MINUTE, UNTIL WHAT'S OVER AND DONE WITH...?
I'VE BEEN TELLIN' YOU NO' EVERYONE LIKES SUPES--WELL, THE GUYS I WORK WITH DOWNRIGHT FUCKIN' LOATHE THEM. SOMETHIN'S GONNA HAPPEN SOONER OR LATER, IT HAS TO DO WI' WHAT'S GOIN' ON IN THE WHITE HOUSE AN' HOW MUCH OF A BAM THE HOMELANDER IS.
THERE'S OTHER THINGS TOO, BUT THE POINT IS IT'S GONNA BE DIABOLICAL. THERE'S GONNA BE ALL SORTS O' FOLK GETTIN' HURT, THERE'S GONNA BE DEATHS...


OKAY... LOOK...
I'M HAVING TROUBLE PROCESSING THIS, I THINK YOU MAY HAVE GONE COMPLETELY NUTS. BUT WHETHER YOU HAVE OR NOT, THERE'S NO WAY I'M GOING TO GO AWAY AND LEAVE YOU...I MEAN IF YOU ARE TELLING THE TRUTH AND THERE'S SOME KIND OF TROUBLE COMING, I CAN'T JUST--
STOP.


THIS IS NO' THE TIME TO PLAY SUPERHERO. TO PUT A FUCKIN' CAPE ON AN' DO THE RIGHT THING.
IT'S THE TIME TO RUN AWAY AN' HIDE UNDER THE BED, AN' HOPE THE WORLD'S STILL IN ONE PIECE WHEN YOU COME OUT AGAIN.

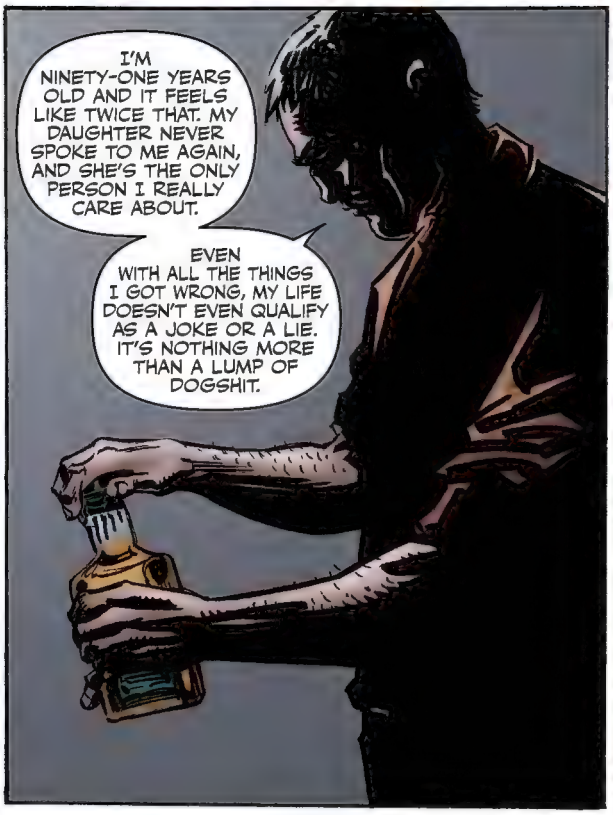
IF YOU KNEW THESE BOYS...IF YOU'D SEEN WHAT THEY WERE CAPABLE OF, OR WHAT SOME O' THE SUPES'VE BEEN UP TO OVER THE YEARS...
HUGHIE--
I CAN'T HAVE YOU GETTIN' HURT, ANNIE. I CAN'T STAND THE THOUGHT OF IT.

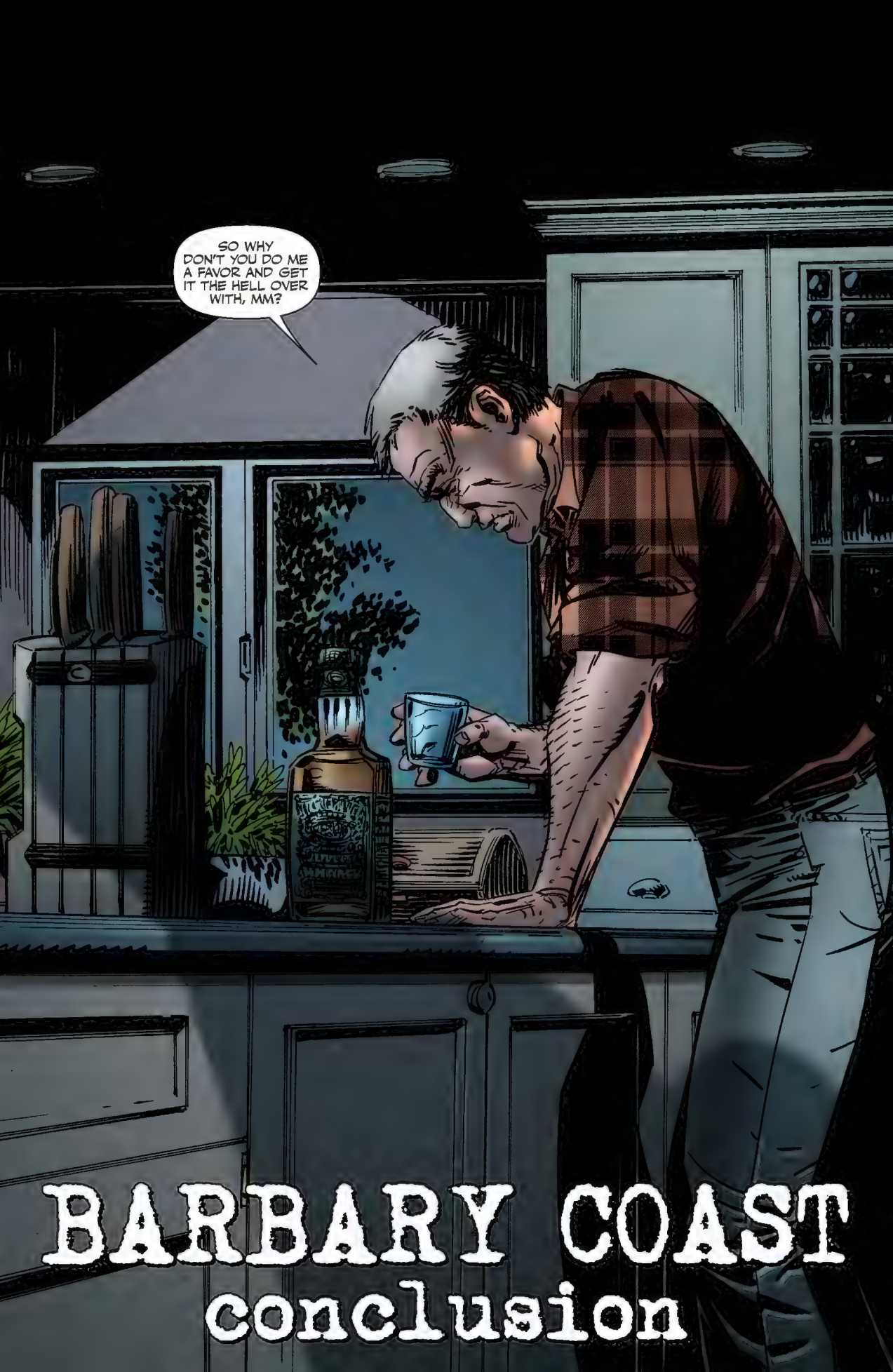

BECAUSE I LOVE YOU.

NO MATTER WHAT'S GONE ON BETWEEN US, I STILL LOVE YOU.

WHAT'D YOU TELL HIM?
EVERYTHING.

YEAH.
I WONDERED WHY M.M. WAS GIVIN' IN SO EASILY. ONLY WAY IT MADE SENSE WAS IF HE'D HANDED THINGS OVER TO YOU.
I REALLY DON'T GIVE A FUCK.


I'M NINETY-ONE YEARS OLD AND IT FEELS LIKE TWICE THAT. MY DAUGHTER NEVER SPOKE TO ME AGAIN, AND SHE'S THE ONLY PERSON I REALLY CARE ABOUT.
EVEN WITH ALL THE THINGS I GOT WRONG, MY LIFE DOESN'T EVEN QUALIFY AS A JOKE OR A LIE. IT'S NOTHING MORE THAN A LUMP OF DOGSHIT.


SO WHY DON'T YOU DO ME A FAVOR AND GET IT THE HELL OVER WITH, MM?
BARBARY COAST
conclusion

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In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

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THE BIG RIDE

part one

RIGHT.

HERE WE GO.

TAX!!
OH--!

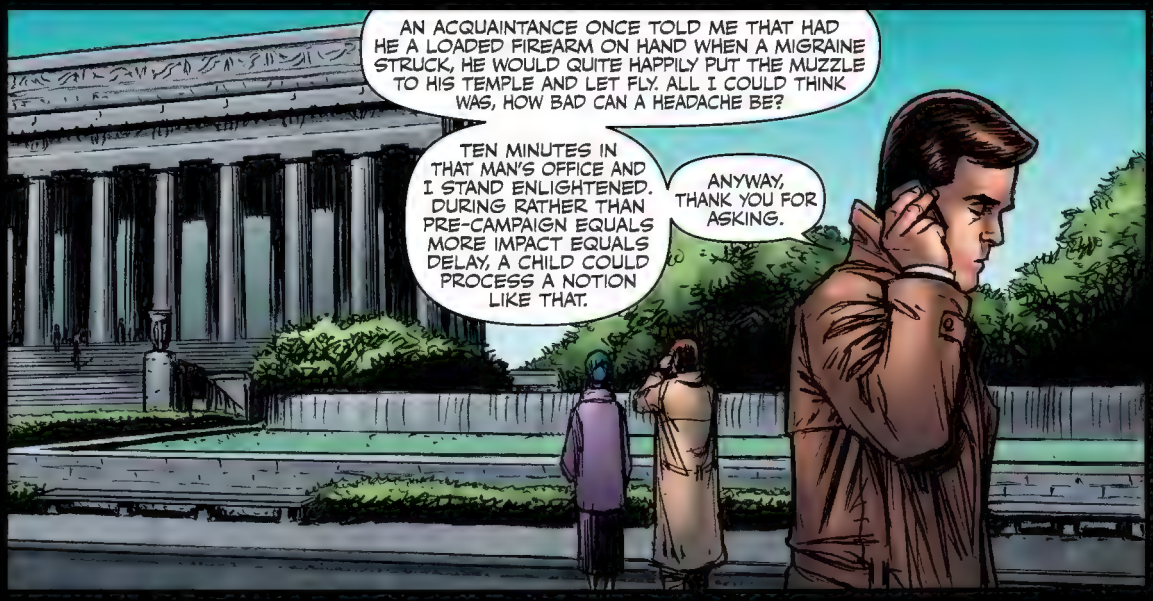
BLOODY HELL, LOOK WHO IT IS. HOW WAS JOCKLAND, THEN?
UH--I--
YOU COMIN'?
BUT--

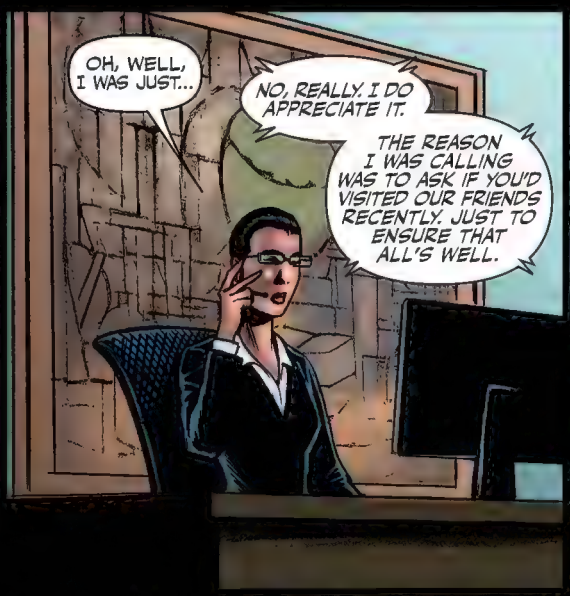
IT'S ME.
I'M BACK.

YEAH, FANFARE O' TRUMPETS, MATE, BUT TIME WAITS FOR NO MAN. WE'VE GOT A JOB ON.
YOU COMIN' OR WHAT?

WHERE ARE WE...AH. WHAT D'YOU MAKE O' THIS, THEN?
AW--!
AW, WHO DID THAT TO HER...?
HAVE ANOTHER LOOK.
IS THAT A...?
IS SHE A, A, IS HE A TRANSVESTITE? I MEAN A TRANS, TRANSSEXUAL?
LOOK IT UP IN THE GUIDEBOOK LATER.
CAUSE O' DEATH WAS A BAD BEATIN'. OL' BILL FOUND THE BODY A BLOCK AN' A HALF FROM WHERE WE'RE GOIN'.
WHERE'S THAT?
PLACE RUN BY A BLOKE GETS SUPES WHAT THEY'RE AFTER. GIRLS, BOYS, PILLS, PORN.
THERE'S A FEW OF 'EM INTO THIS SORT O' THING, BIRDS WITH DICKS AN' THAT. THEY GIVE HIM A BELL IN ADVANCE AN' HE HAS WHATEVER THEY'VE ORDERED WAITIN'.
WHO IS HE? WAIT A MINUTE, WHY ARE WE INTERESTED IN--
WELL, ONE, YOU MIGHT REMEMBER WE DON'T LET THESE ARSEHOLES GO AROUND OFFIN' WHOEVER THEY FANCY. AN' TWO, THE NAME THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT LADYBOYS--LOCALLY, ANYWAY--IS JACK FROM JUPITER.
BUT...

JACK...?
YEAH. SPECIFICALLY HE LIKES TO SAY HIS MAGIC WORD, TURN INVULNERABLE, AN' THEN HAVE A GANG OF 'EM FUCK HIM SIX WAYS TO BREAKFAST TIME FOR AS LONG AS THE LITTLE BLUE PILLS LAST.
I'M THE UNFORTUNATE OWNER OF AN AWARD-WINNIN' SHORT DEPICTIN' EXACTLY THAT.
JESUS.
I THOUGHT I'D SEEN IT ALL AT HEROGASM, BUT JUST WHEN YOU THINK THE BASTARDS'VE DONE IT ALL...
YEAH? MY EYES GLAZED OVER AGES AGO, TO BE HONEST WITH YOU.
I SOMETIMES THINK EVERY ONE OF 'EM JUST GOES DOWN A BIG LIST O' KINKS, UNTIL HE FINDS THE ONE THAT GIVES HIM A HARD-ON.
AYE. LISTEN, THERE'S SOMETHIN' I WANNA SAY HERE, ALL RIGHT?
I WAS DOIN' A BIT O' THINKIN' WHILE I WAS AWAY. AN'...THINGS AREN'T GONNA BE THE SAME AS THEY USED TO BE.
I...
SSHHLLOOOOORRRPP
OCH, TERROR...!
YOU'RE A GOOD WEE DUG, AREN'T YOU, PAL? I'M SORRY, I NEVER EVEN SAID HELLO TO YOU!
OCH, YOU'RE A GOOD WEE DUG.
HE IS.
I DON'T TELL HIM IT OFTEN ENOUGH, BUT HE IS.


AN ACQUAINTANCE ONCE TOLD ME THAT HAD HE A LOADED FIREARM ON HAND WHEN A MIGRAINE STRUCK, HE WOULD QUITE HAPPILY PUT THE MUZZLE TO HIS TEMPLE AND LET FLY. ALL I COULD THINK WAS, HOW BAD CAN A HEADACHE BE?
TEN MINUTES IN THAT MAN'S OFFICE AND I STAND ENLIGHTENED. DURING RATHER THAN PRE-CAMPAIGN EQUALS MORE IMPACT EQUALS DELAY, A CHILD COULD PROCESS A NOTION LIKE THAT.
ANYWAY, THANK YOU FOR ASKING.

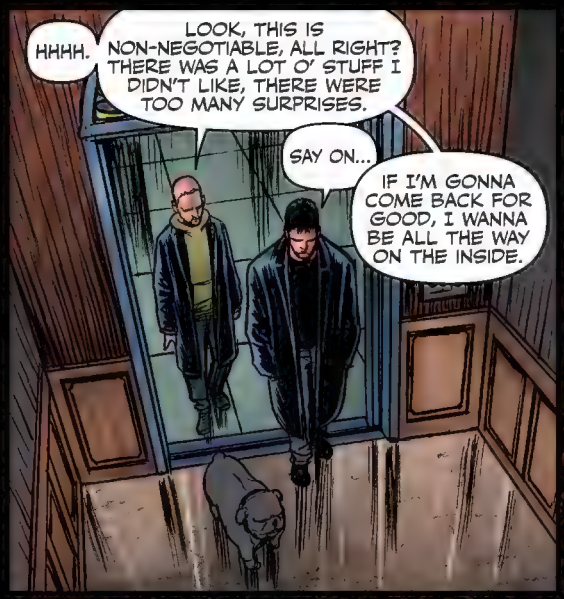

OH, WELL, I WAS JUST...
NO, REALLY. I DO APPRECIATE IT.
THE REASON I WAS CALLING WAS TO ASK IF YOU'D VISITED OUR FRIENDS RECENTLY. JUST TO ENSURE THAT ALL'S WELL.

AH, NO, I...WELL NO, I HAVEN'T.
NO?
NO, I'VE BEEN DOING A LOT OF REVIEWING. CREATIVE EXPLORATION ARE WELL WORTH KEEPING AN EYE ON, AS YOU SAID...
I ALSO MENTIONED THE TEAMS. THAT TEAM.

THE LAST THING WE WANT NOW IS SOME UNFORESEEN DEVELOPMENT. PARTICULARLY AS WE MOVE INTO THIS FINAL PHASE.
OF COURSE.
THEIR TIME WILL PASS, UNQUESTIONABLY. BUT THEIR P.R. IMPACT WILL BE CRUCIAL DURING THE TRANSITION.
I'LL LOOK INTO IT RIGHT AWAY, I PROMISE.

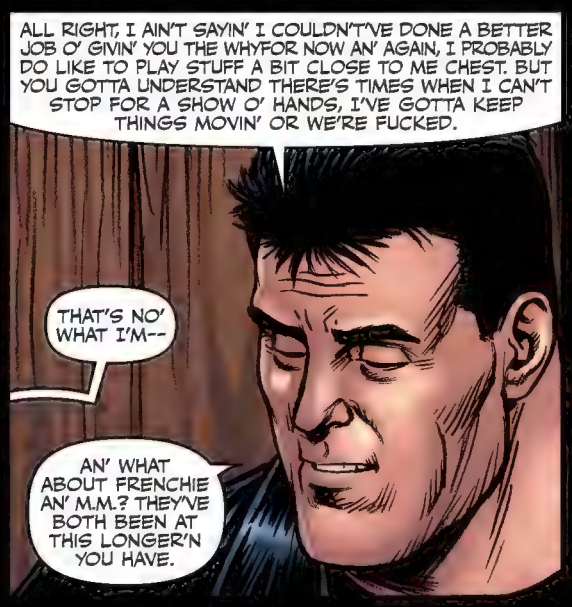
LISTEN, IF YOU KEEP ON GETTING MIGRAINES, I KNOW A--
MY PROBLEMS ARE NOTHING, MS. BRADLEY.
BACK TO WORK FOR US BOTH.

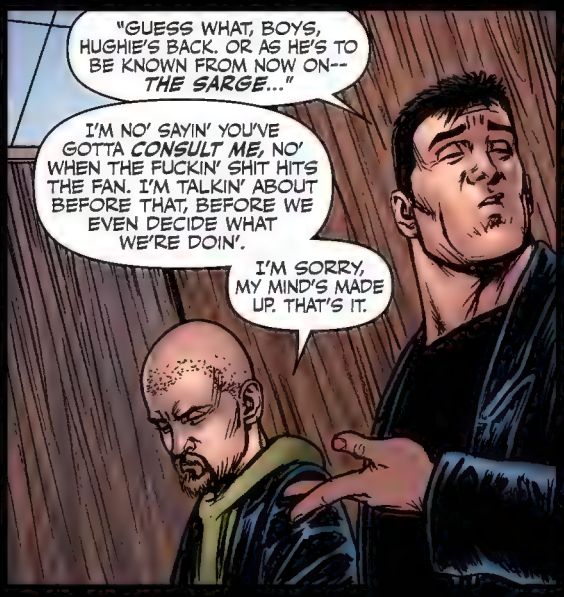
I'VE NO' BEEN THIS HIGH UP ON THE UPPER EAST SIDE BEFORE...
EIGHTY-NINTH AN' TOSSER. SO SPEAKIN' OF ALL THE TIME YOU WERE AWAY, WERE YOU EVER IN TOUCH WITH BLONDIE?
EH? OH. NO, SHE'S OUT O' THE PICTURE.
NO, HOW COULD SHE BE?
SO SHE'S NONE THE WISER ABOUT ANY OF US...
NICE ONE.
I'M SERIOUS. I DON'T WANNA BE RUNNIN' TO CATCH UP LIKE I USED TO BE, I WANNA BE INVOLVED PROPERLY. EVERY TIME THERE'S AN OPERATION, I WANNA BE PART O' THE DECISION-MAKIN' PROCESS...
BLIMEY, HUGHIE. WHO HAVE YOU BEEN TALKIN' TO?
LOOK, BEFORE WE GO AN' SEE THIS SUPE *PIMP* OR WHATEVER HE IS, THERE'S SOMETHIN' WE HAVE TO GET CLEAR:
WHAT, THAT THINGS AIN'T GONNA BE THE SAME?
I'VE NO' BEEN *TALKIN'* TO ANYONE, I CAN WORK THINGS FOR MYSELF--I MEAN I CAN WORK THINGS OUT, I CAN THINK FOR MYSELF...!


HHHH.
LOOK, THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE, ALL RIGHT? THERE WAS A LOT O' STUFF I DIDN'T LIKE, THERE WERE TOO MANY SURPRISES.
SAY ON...
IF I'M GONNA COME BACK FOR GOOD, I WANNA BE ALL THE WAY ON THE INSIDE.

I WANNA BE SECOND IN COMMAND AROUND HERE.
BE LIKE AN N.C.O..

HMM.
THIS IS WHAT YOU SPENT YER SUMMER HOLIDAY THINKIN' ABOUT, IS IT?
I WASN'T ON--
I KNOW.


ALL RIGHT, I AIN'T SAYIN' I COULDN'T'VE DONE A BETTER JOB O' GIVIN' YOU THE WHYFOR NOW AN' AGAIN, I PROBABLY DO LIKE TO PLAY STUFF A BIT CLOSE TO ME CHEST. BUT YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND THERE'S TIMES WHEN I CAN'T STOP FOR A SHOW O' HANDS, I'VE GOTTA KEEP THINGS MOVIN' OR WE'RE FUCKED.
THAT'S NO' WHAT I'M--
AN' WHAT ABOUT FRENCHIE AN' M.M.? THEY'VE BOTH BEEN AT THIS LONGER'N YOU HAVE.


"GUESS WHAT, BOYS, HUGHIE'S BACK. OR AS HE'S TO BE KNOWN FROM NOW ON-- THE SARGE..."
I'M NO' SAYIN' YOU'VE GOTTA CONSULT ME, NO' WHEN THE FUCKIN' SHIT HITS THE FAN. I'M TALKIN' ABOUT BEFORE THAT, BEFORE WE EVEN DECIDE WHAT WE'RE DOIN'.
I'M SORRY, MY MIND'S MADE UP. THAT'S IT.

YOU FUCK OFF FOR NEARLY A MONTH AN' COME BACK AN' DROP THIS IN ME LAP, AN' ALL YOU'LL SAY IS YER MIND'S MADE UP AN' THAT'S IT?
YES...

FAIR ENOUGH. WHAT ABOUT THIS: YOU EARN IT.
EH...?
EARN IT. YOU DO A GOOD JOB ON THIS THING NOW--IF IT TURNS OUT TO BE SOMETHIN', AT ANY RATE--AN' WHEN WE'RE DONE I'LL DECIDE.
IF I THINK YOU'VE PULLED YER WEIGHT, IF YOU SHOW YOU CAN THINK ON YER FEET AN' YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES, YOU'RE SORTED. WE'LL WORK OUT WHAT TO SAY TO M.M. LATER.
IF I DON'T BELIEVE YOU CAN HACK IT...I'LL TELL YOU.
UM...
C'MON, I CAN'T SAY FAIRER THAN THAT, CAN I?
UH, ALL RIGHT. YOU'RE ON.
WHAT DOES N.C.O. STAND FOR, HUGHIE?
EH?
N.C.O.. WHAT'S IT STAND FOR?
UH...
COME AN' MEET DOCTOR PECULIAR.

I MEAN FUCK KNOWS WHAT HIS REAL NAME IS, THAT'S JUST WHAT EVERYONE CALLS HIM.
WATCH OUT FOR THE AIDS MONKEYS, BY THE WAY...
NEEK-NEEK-NEEK-NEEK-NEEK!

I DIDN'T FUCKING DO SHIT...!
REALLY.
I'M TELLING YOU, IT WASN'T ME! I HAVEN'T EVEN BEEN TO PECULIAR'S! I MEAN NOT FOR FUCKING MONTHS, AT LEAST!
NO--!
BUT WHEN YOU DO GO...
COME ON, JACK, IT'S YOUR THING. IT'S ONE OF YOUR THINGS. I MEAN SOME OF THE PORN YOU FORWARD TO ME, JESUS...
NO ONE'S JUDGING YOU OR ANYTHING, IT'S JUST THAT IF THINGS WENT A LITTLE TOO FAR ONE TIME--
WHAT?
OH YOU TWO-FACED LITTLE BITCH, A-TRAIN--!
WHEN I REMEMBER THE SHIT I'VE DONE FOR YOU--THE PLACES I'VE TAKEN YOU, THE PEOPLE YOU'D NEVER HAVE MET WITHOUT ME! I TRUSTED YOU, AND YOU SIT HERE AND FUCKING DO ME LIKE THIS! WITH THIS PATHETIC PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE CRAP!
OKAY... OKAY...
YOU THINK ANYONE HERE ACTUALLY BUYS IT? OR YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO GET AHEAD? YOU COULDN'T BE LESS FUCKING SUBTLE IF YOU PULLED THE HOMELANDER'S PANTS DOWN AND RAN YOUR TONGUE UP HIS ASS!

MEANWHILE. REGARDING THE EMAIL FROM VOUGHT.
I'M NOT... TRYING... TO CHANGE... THE SUBJECT...!
LOOK.
I DON'T THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA FOR ANY OF US--ANY OF US--TO START STANDING IN JUDGMENT ON ANYONE ELSE'S EXTRA-CURRICULAR SHIT. THERE ARE VERY FEW SECRETS LEFT AROUND HERE, EITHER ABOUT WHERE PEOPLE STICK IT OR WHERE THEY LIKE IT STUCK.
REGARDING WHAT I DO AT DOC PECULIAR'S: TOPIC FUCKING CLOSED. REGARDING THE EMAIL FROM V.A.: I DIDN'T KILL THE FREAK.
OKAY?
HMMM...
DUDE, YOU CAN PUT ME ON A FUCKING LIE-DETECTOR...!
YOU REALIZE THIS IS THE WORST POSSIBLE TIME, WITH THE HOMELANDER'S PLANS APPROACHING FRUITION...
YES, EXACTLY! I MEAN WHY THE FUCK WOULD I DO THIS NOW, WHEN WE'RE JUST ABOUT TO TAKE DOWN THE GODDAMN--
NO.
I DON'T WANT ANY DISCUSSION OF THAT.
NOT HERE.

YOU THINK...?
BUT VOUGHT TOOK THE BUGS OUT, RIGHT? THEY SWEEP THE PLACE ALL THE TIME!
THEY COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN REPLACED. OR DEACTIVATED WHEN A SWEEP BEGINS, THEN SWITCHED BACK ON. WE NEVER DID FIND OUT HOW BUTCHER'S PEOPLE GOT THEM IN HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE.

THAT WOULD INDEED BE DISASTROUS...
THOSE FUCKERS, I COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT THEM...
CONFIRMING WHAT A DIPSHIT YOU ARE. IN CASE ANYONE HAD ANY DOUBTS.

FUCK YOU, YOU COCKSUCKER--!
FUCK YOU, YOU BACKSTABBING PRICK!
READY FOR ANOTHER, O AMAZON WARRIORESS?
...FUCK OFF AND GET ME AN O.J. INSTEAD.

AT LEAST I'M NOT A SHIT-STABBER, FAG FROM JUPITER!
THAT'S BRILLIANT, DID YOU COME UP WITH THAT WHEN YOU WERE JERKING OFF TO THE MIRROR?
ENOUGH...

LET'S JUST REMEMBER THAT WALLS HAVE EARS.
WHETHER YOU KILLED THIS CREATURE OR NOT IS MOOT: ENOUGH PEOPLE WILL THINK YOU DID THAT THEY'LL TAKE AN INTEREST REGARDLESS. JUST KEEP A LOW PROFILE, AND PRAY THAT THE POLICE INVESTIGATION GOES NOWHERE.

AND IN THE MEANTIME, TRY TO KEEP AWAY FROM ANY COCKS THAT AREN'T YOUR OWN...

ALL RIGHT, DOC, I HEARD YOU'D HAD A SPOT O' BOTHER. MIND IF WE HAVE A SNIFF AROUND?

NAH, 'COURSE YOU DON'T. YOU KNOW WHAT SIDE YER BREAD'S BUTTERED, DON'T YOU?

NEEK!
NEEK!
TERROR...
NEEK-NEEK-NEEK!

GGRRRRRRRR
NEEK-NEEK-NEEK-NEEK-NEEK!

DOES HE MIND...?
YEAH, 'COURSE.
BUT HE DON'T WANT HIS GIRLS AN' BOYS AN' INBETWEEN GETTIN' DONE IN, THAT'S BAD FOR BUSINESS. AN' HE KNOWS THE N.Y.P.D. AIN'T GONNA MAKE IT A PRIORITY.
AN' LET'S FACE IT, HE KNOWS BETTER'N TO SAY NO TO ME.

YOU GO BACK A BIT, DO YOU?
YEAH, WE'RE LIKE THAT. EXCEPT I WOULDN'T LET THE WEIRD FUCKIN' BASTARD ANYWHERE NEAR ME.
HE SUPPLIES HIGH CLASS STRANGE FOR SUPES WILLIN' TO PAY, YOU'RE BLEEDIN' RIGHT WE GO BACK A BIT...
JINGS, HE'S GOT--DO THEY KNOW HE HAS ALL THIS...?
SMARTER ONES PROBABLY KNOW HE HAS SOMETHIN'. IT AIN'T FOR BLACKMAIL, IT'S JUST TO BE SURE THEY DON'T MISBEHAVE WITH THE MERCHANDISE--WHICH IS ANOTHER REASON WHY THIS THING WITH JACK'S SO DODGY.
HERE, YOU WANNA SEE A PHOTO OF SOLDIER BOY DRINKIN' PISS?
WHAT? AW, FOR FUCK'S SAKE--!
THERE'S ANOTHER ONE OF HIM DOIN' THE OL' HUMAN ASHTRAY BIT, IF YOU'RE INTERESTED.
NO THANKS.
I WAS RIGHT, WASN'T I? THERE REALLY IS NO FUCKIN' END TO THIS.
WHAT, THE SEX STUFF? WELL, MAYBE IT'S A BIT LIKE BEIN' A PORN STAR: BY THE TIME YOU GET THERE, YOU'RE ENOUGH OF A MESS THAT YOU'RE UP FOR ANYTHING.
I MEAN LOOK AT THE PRESSURE THE SUPE KIDS ARE UNDER JUST FROM THEIR MUMS AN' DADS, OR THE THINGS THE TECHS AT VOUGHT DO TO TRAIN 'EM. AN' THAT'S EVEN WITHOUT SOME DIRTY OL' CUNT LIKE GODOLKIN COMIN' ALONG.

THEN AGAIN, MAYBE IT'S MORE LIKE ANCIENT ROME: THEY CAN SO THEY DO. I DUNNO, REALLY, IF I WAS A PSYCHIATRIST I WOULDN'T BE CARRYIN' A CROWBAR AROUND WITH ME.
HERE WE ARE...
IT'S JUST A BIT OF A SICKENER, THOUGH. ALL THAT POWER, ALL THAT POTENTIAL...I MEAN THERE'S SOME O' THEM COULD FLY TO THE BLOODY MOON...
JACK FROM JUPITER

IT'D ALMOST MAKE YOU THINK ABOUT JUST EXTERMINATIN' THE LOT O' THEM, WOULDN'T IT?

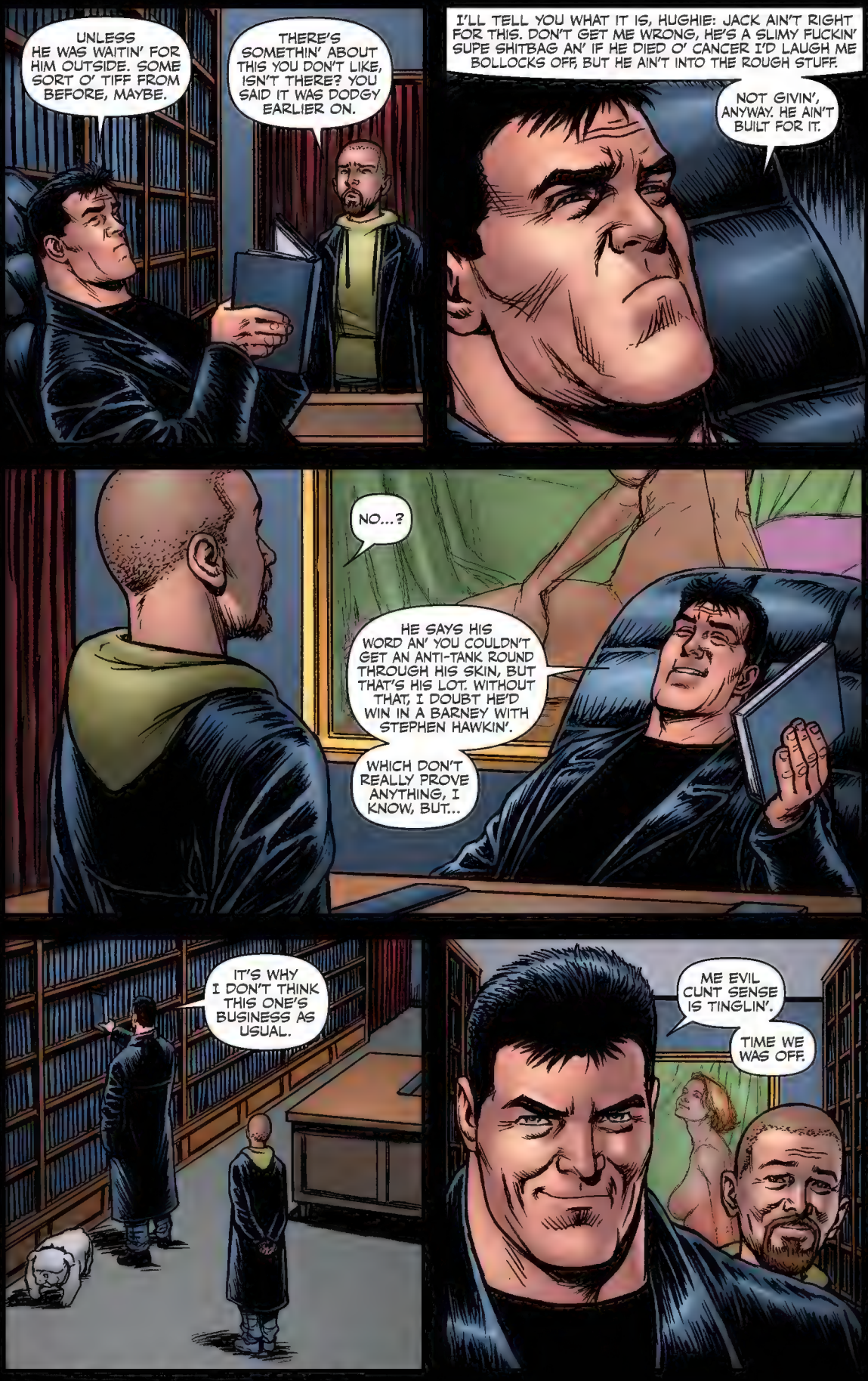
OH YEAH?
AYE, JUST DO THEM ALL. TOTAL ANNIHILATION, SOLVE EVERY PROBLEM IN ONE GO.
BLIMEY.

THEN AGAIN, WHERE WOULD THE FUN IN THAT BE, EH?
PRE-CISELY, MY SON.

JACK
5:00-

BLACK NOIR
A-TRAIN
THE DEAD
HOMELANDER
QUEEN MAEVE
...HUH.

HERE, DID YOU KEN THAT SPACER OUT THERE DOES ABORTIONS?
ONE O' THE MANY SERVICES HE PROVIDES. LEMME GUESS: MAEVE?
UH...
YEAH, HE'S BEEN RUMMAGIN' AROUND UP THERE SO LONG HE'S PROBABLY FOUND STORMFRONT'S CAR KEYS.
STORMFRONT...?
FOR STARTERS. HOW MANY LITTLE OPS IS SHE ON NOW, TWO DOZEN OR SO?
UM...I THINK IT'S GONE UP A WEE BIT SINCE YOU LAST HAD A LOOK...
ATTAGIRL.
ALL RIGHT, SO JACK WAS HERE THE NIGHT IT HAPPENED. POINT AGAINST. THEN AGAIN, THE TRANNY THEY FOUND WAS HERE EARLIER ON, BUT WASN'T ONE O' THE ONES HE WAS WITH.
OH AYE?
YEAH, HE PAID FOR FOUR OF 'EM, APPARENTLY HE LIKES A GOOD LONG SESSION. BUT WHEN HE ARRIVED HE ONLY WANTED THE THREE, HE MADE SOME JOKE ABOUT FEELIN' HIS AGE. ANASTASIA...OR KEV BAKER OF HANCOCK, NEW YORK, AS WAS...LEFT ABOUT EIGHT-THIRTY. JACK WAS HERE 'TIL ONE IN THE MORNIN'.
YOU LISTENIN'?
AYE, AYE, ONE IN THE MORNIN'. SO IT CAN'T'VE BEEN JACK.

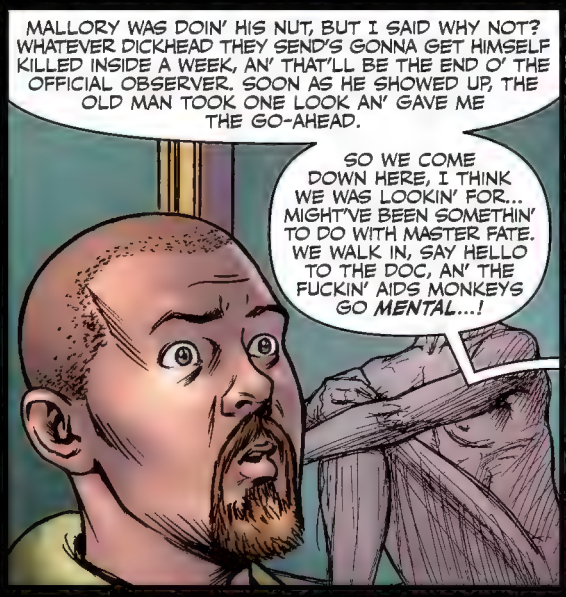

UNLESS HE WAS WAITIN' FOR HIM OUTSIDE. SOME SORT O' TIFF FROM BEFORE, MAYBE.
THERE'S SOMETHIN' ABOUT THIS YOU DON'T LIKE, ISN'T THERE? YOU SAID IT WAS DODGY EARLIER ON.
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT IT IS, HUGHIE: JACK AIN'T RIGHT FOR THIS. DON'T GET ME WRONG, HE'S A SLIMY FUCKIN' SUPE SHITBAG AN' IF HE DIED O' CANCER I'D LAUGH ME BOLLOCKS OFF, BUT HE AIN'T INTO THE ROUGH STUFF.
NOT GIVIN', ANYWAY. HE AIN'T BUILT FOR IT.
NO...?
HE SAYS HIS WORD AN' YOU COULDN'T GET AN ANTI-TANK ROUND THROUGH HIS SKIN, BUT THAT'S HIS LOT. WITHOUT THAT, I DOUBT HE'D WIN IN A BARNEY WITH STEPHEN HAWKIN'.
WHICH DON'T REALLY PROVE ANYTHING, I KNOW, BUT...
IT'S WHY I DON'T THINK THIS ONE'S BUSINESS AS USUAL.
ME EVIL CUNT SENSE IS TINGLIN'.
TIME WE WAS OFF.

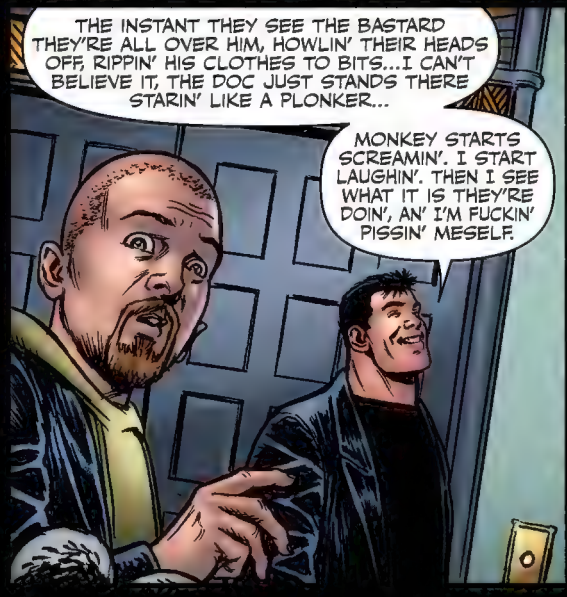
YEAH, CHEERS, DOC! WE'LL GIVE YOU A SHOUT AS SOON AS WE HEAR!
YOU MENTAL FUCKIN' BLEEDER...
WHAT IS THIS?

I NOTICED IT ON THE WAY IN, WHAT IS IT?
OH, BLOODY HELL, HE DIDN'T HAVE A FUCKIN' *STATUE* MADE OF IT--!

WONDERS WILL NEVER CEASE.
REMIND YOU OF ANYONE?
IT'S... IT'S...
IT'S NO' YOUR MAN *KESSLER*, IS IT...?

BRACE YERSELF.
NOT LONG AFTER RAYNER TOOK OVER, SHE SAID WE HAD TO HAVE AN OFFICIAL OBSERVER ALONG ON THE JOBS. JUST THE NEW BOSS TRYNNA PUT HER STAMP ON THINGS, YOU KNOW THE ROUTINE.


MALLORY WAS DOIN' HIS NUT, BUT I SAID WHY NOT? WHATEVER DICKHEAD THEY SEND'S GONNA GET HIMSELF KILLED INSIDE A WEEK, AN' THAT'LL BE THE END O' THE OFFICIAL OBSERVER. SOON AS HE SHOWED UP, THE OLD MAN TOOK ONE LOOK AN' GAVE ME THE GO-AHEAD.
SO WE COME DOWN HERE, I THINK WE WAS LOOKIN' FOR... MIGHT'VE BEEN SOMETHIN' TO DO WITH MASTER FATE. WE WALK IN, SAY HELLO TO THE DOC, AN' THE FUCKIN' AIDS MONKEYS GO *MENTAL*...!


THE INSTANT THEY SEE THE BASTARD THEY'RE ALL OVER HIM, HOWLIN' THEIR HEADS OFF, RIPPIN' HIS CLOTHES TO BITS...I CAN'T BELIEVE IT, THE DOC JUST STANDS THERE STARIN' LIKE A PLONKER...
MONKEY STARTS SCREAMIN'. I START LAUGHIN'. THEN I SEE WHAT IT IS THEY'RE DOIN', AN' I'M FUCKIN' PISSIN' MESELF.

HOW THE MONKEY GOT HIS NAME:
AW, JESUS CHRIST--!
HUGHIE, IT WAS THE FUNNIEST FUCKIN' THING I'VE EVER SEEN IN ME LIFE, MATE.
EVENTUALLY I STOP LAUGHIN' LONG ENOUGH TO PULL THE BLOODY THINGS OFF HIM, BUT THE DAMAGE IS DONE. HE'S FLAPPIN' NINETY TO THE DOZEN--I'VE GOT AIDS! THEY'VE GIVEN ME AIDS! AIDS, AIDS, I'M GONNA DIE OF AIDS!
I SAID DON'T BE A FUCKIN' CUNT, SON, YOU CAN'T CATCH IT FROM BEIN' SPIT-ROASTED IN THE EARS BY MONKEYS, JUST 'COS SOME LUNATIC'S DYED 'EM GREEN...!
AW, SO THEY'RE NO' ACTUALLY...
OH, FUCKIN' HELL.
NO, THEY AIN'T. BUT I'M TOLD YOU CAN DEFINITELY GET IT FROM BOG SEATS, IF YOU AIN'T GOT YER WITS ABOUT YOU.

AYE, ALL RIGHT, FUNNY MAN. SOME O' THE SHITE I'VE SEEN IN THE LAST COUPLE O' YEARS MAKES AIDS MONKEYS SOUND DOWNRIGHT SENSIBLE.
YEAH, FAIR ENOUGH.

TELL YOU WHAT, IT'S A BLOODY GOOD JOB YOU CAN'T GET IF OFF 'EM, OR WE'D HAVE TO HAVE GOT MONKEY A SHOT.

SHOT O' WHAT?
YOU KNOW. TAKE CARE O' THE VIRUS AN' THAT.
EH?
I MEAN IT COSTS A FUCKIN' FORTUNE, BUT...

ARE YOU TRYNNA TELL ME WE'VE A *CURE FOR--*

NO' FUNNY.
AW, C'MON, MATE--!
NO' FUNNY AT ALL.
IT WAS JUST THE LOOK ON YER FACE...!
I MEAN C'MON, IF WE REALLY DID HAVE A CURE FOR AIDS WOULD I FUCKIN' GIVE IT TO *MONKEY*...?
...BEHOLD MY TRIUMPHANT FUCKIN' RETURN.

next: ANNIE-NONYMOUS

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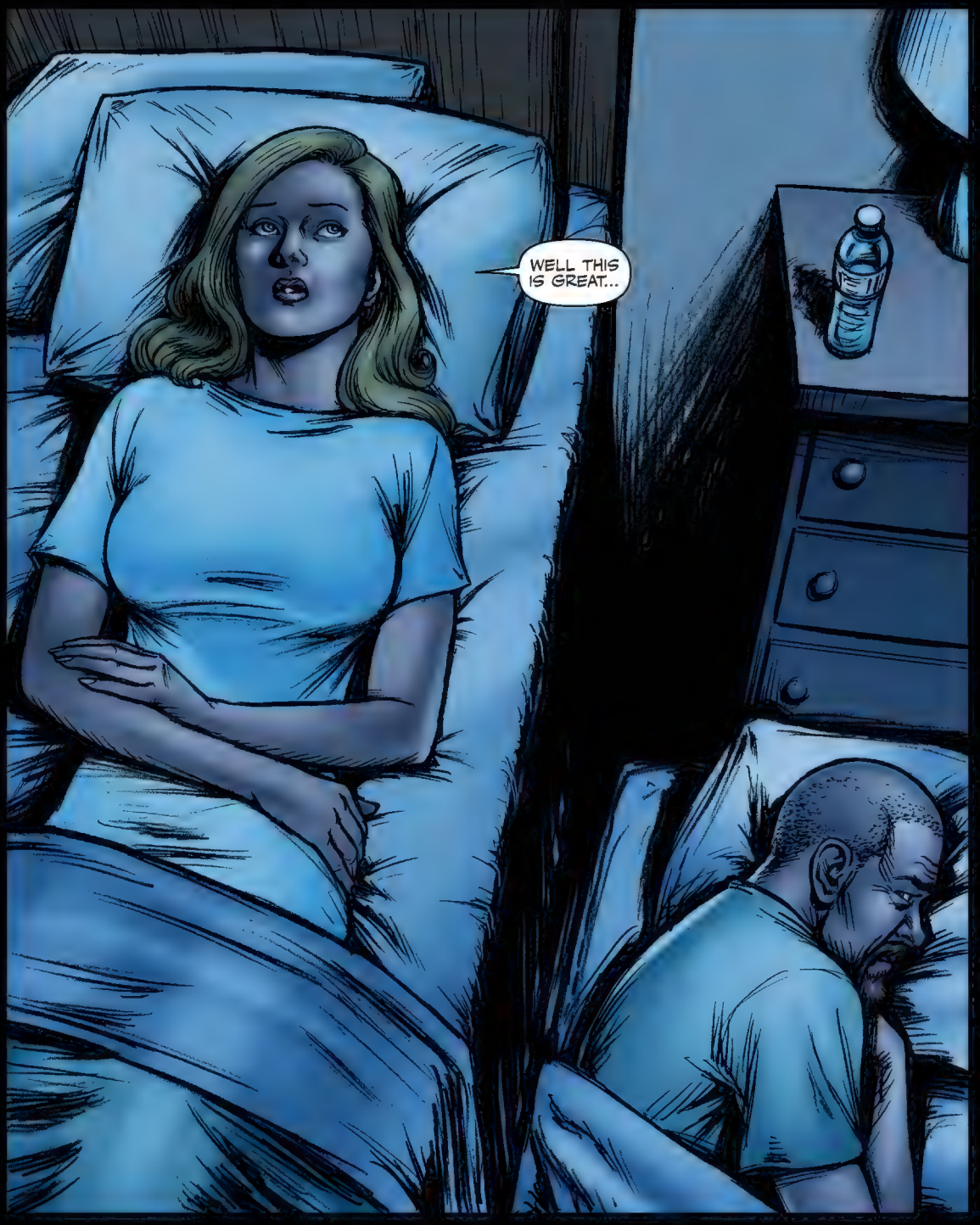
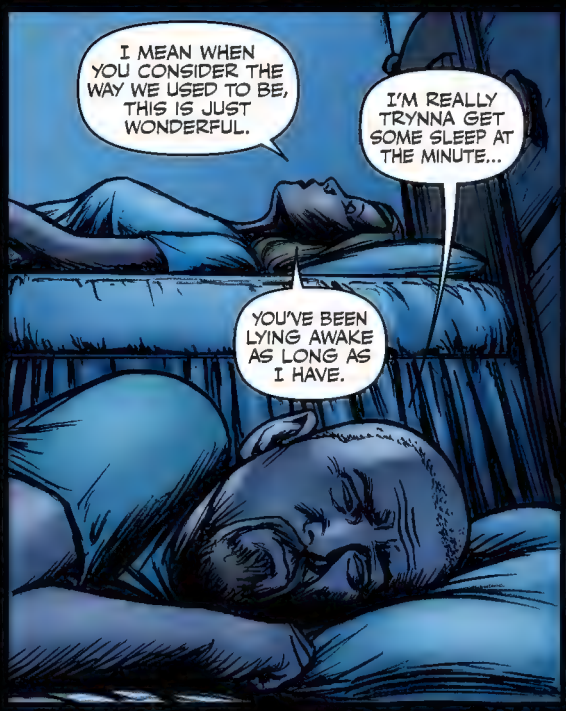
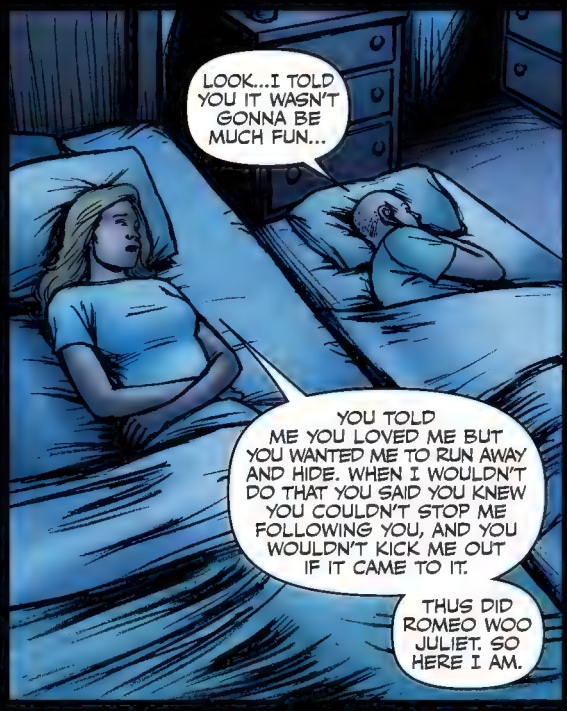


THE BIG RIDE

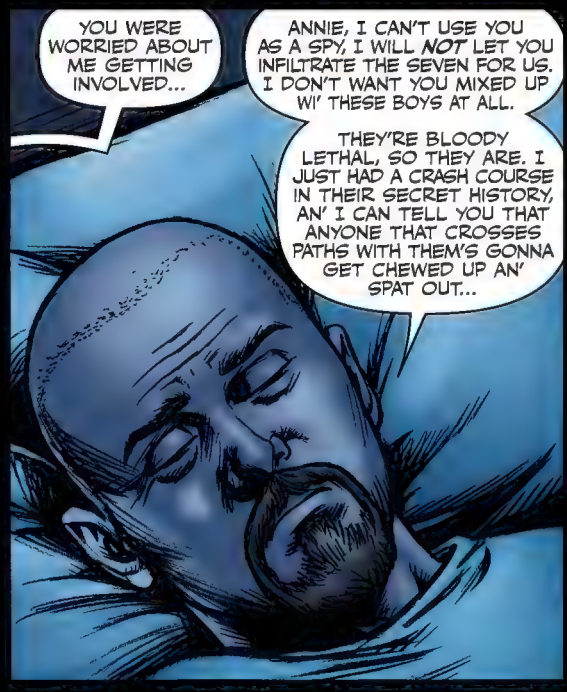
part two


I MEAN WHEN YOU CONSIDER THE WAY WE USED TO BE, THIS IS JUST WONDERFUL.
I'M REALLY TRYNNA GET SOME SLEEP AT THE MINUTE...
YOU'VE BEEN LYING AWAKE AS LONG AS I HAVE.

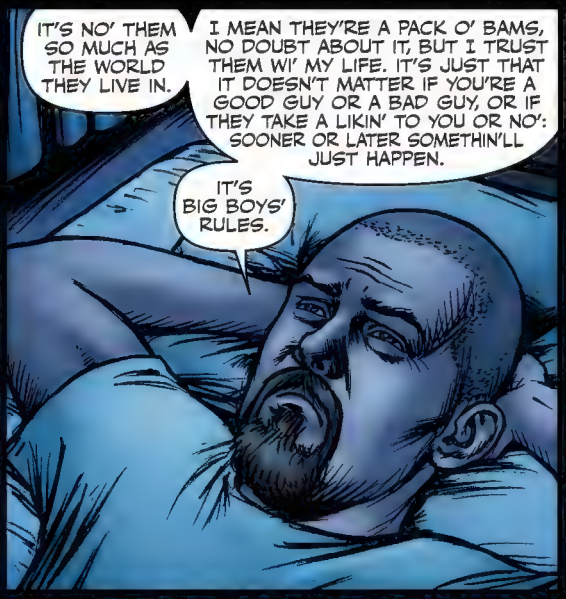

LOOK...I TOLD YOU IT WASN'T GONNA BE MUCH FUN...
YOU TOLD ME YOU LOVED ME BUT YOU WANTED ME TO RUN AWAY AND HIDE. WHEN I WOULDN'T DO THAT YOU SAID YOU KNEW YOU COULDN'T STOP ME FOLLOWING YOU, AND YOU WOULDN'T KICK ME OUT IF IT CAME TO IT.
THUS DID ROMEO WOO JULIET. SO HERE I AM.

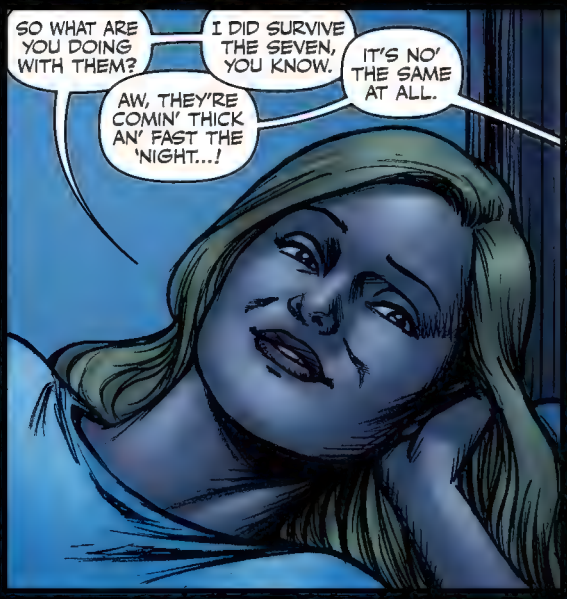
YOU'RE LAUGHING.
I CAN SEE YOU, YOU'RE LAUGHING.

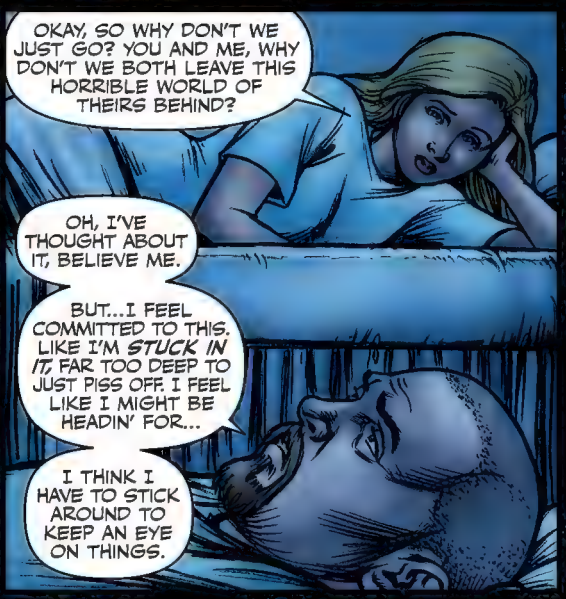
I WAS TRYNNA THINK ABOUT PRACTICALITIES.
I HAVE MONEY, I MOVED WHAT I'VE SAVED FROM MY STIPEND OUT OF MY SEVEN ACCOUNT. AND I KNOW THE C.I.A. MUST PAY YOU SOMETHING, SECRET AGENT-MAN.
I MEAN I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU GETTIN' HURT.


YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT ME GETTING INVOLVED...
ANNIE, I CAN'T USE YOU AS A SPY, I WILL *NOT* LET YOU INFILTRATE THE SEVEN FOR US. I DON'T WANT YOU MIXED UP WI' THESE BOYS AT ALL.
THEY'RE BLOODY LETHAL, SO THEY ARE. I JUST HAD A CRASH COURSE IN THEIR SECRET HISTORY, AN' I CAN TELL YOU THAT ANYONE THAT CROSSES PATHS WITH THEM'S GONNA GET CHEWED UP AN' SPAT OUT...

THEN WHY ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE THE RISK?
I'M ONE O' THEM.
REALLY...?
CLOSE ENOUGH.

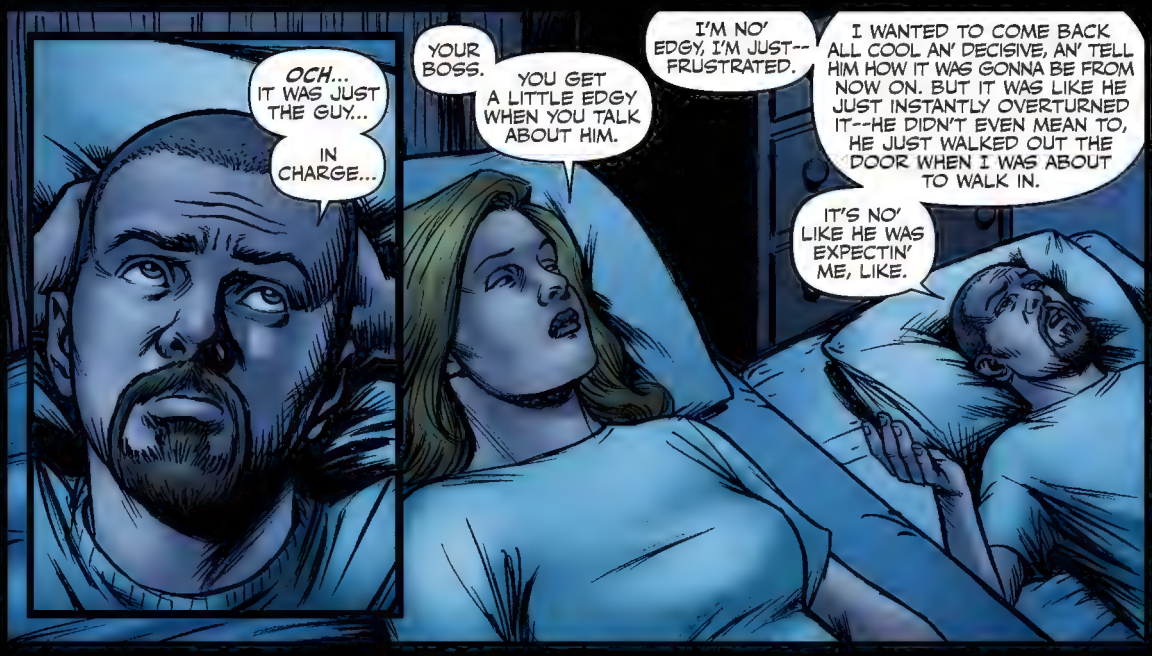

IT'S NO' THEM SO MUCH AS THE WORLD THEY LIVE IN.
I MEAN THEY'RE A PACK O' BAMS, NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, BUT I TRUST THEM WI' MY LIFE. IT'S JUST THAT IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU'RE A GOOD GUY OR A BAD GUY, OR IF THEY TAKE A LIKIN' TO YOU OR NO': SOONER OR LATER SOMETHIN'LL JUST HAPPEN.
IT'S BIG BOYS' RULES.


SO WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THEM?
I DID SURVIVE THE SEVEN, YOU KNOW.
IT'S NO' THE SAME AT ALL.
AW, THEY'RE COMIN' THICK AN' FAST THE 'NIGHT...!


OKAY, SO WHY DON'T WE JUST GO? YOU AND ME, WHY DON'T WE BOTH LEAVE THIS HORRIBLE WORLD OF THEIRS BEHIND?
OH, I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT, BELIEVE ME.
BUT...I FEEL COMMITTED TO THIS. LIKE I'M *STUCK IN IT,* FAR TOO DEEP TO JUST PISS OFF. I FEEL LIKE I MIGHT BE HEADIN' FOR...
I THINK I HAVE TO STICK AROUND TO KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS.

AN' I KNOW I SAID THEY WERE BAMPOTS, BUT THEY'RE MY PALS...
WHICH IS JUST THE BEST WORD FOR CRAZY PEOPLE *EVER.*

I LIKE HEAD-THE-BALLS. OR SPACERS.
WHAT'S THAT OTHER ONE, LOOPERS?
YOU WERE KIND OF QUIET WHEN YOU GOT IN TONIGHT.


OCH... IT WAS JUST THE GUY...
IN CHARGE...
YOUR BOSS.
YOU GET A LITTLE EDGY WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT HIM.
I'M NO' EDGY, I'M JUST-- FRUSTRATED.
I WANTED TO COME BACK ALL COOL AN' DECISIVE, AN' TELL HIM HOW IT WAS GONNA BE FROM NOW ON. BUT IT WAS LIKE HE JUST INSTANTLY OVERTURNED IT--HE DIDN'T EVEN MEAN TO, HE JUST WALKED OUT THE DOOR WHEN I WAS ABOUT TO WALK IN.
IT'S NO' LIKE HE WAS EXPECTIN' ME, LIKE.

UNLESS HE SAW ME THROUGH THE DOOR WHEN I WAS COMIN' ACROSS FIFTH...

I DUNNO. BUT IF THERE'S ANYONE ACTUALLY *LIKES* THE WORLD THE WAY I WAS TALKIN' ABOUT, IT'S HIM.
IT'S STARTIN' TO LOOK LIKE HE DOES EVERYTHING HE CAN TO KEEP IT THAT WAY.
HUH.

THIS IS THE SAME GUY THAT GAVE US OUR LINE--
ABOUT TWO PEOPLE FINDING EACH OTHER?

WARF! WARF! WARF! WARF!
MUBBLE?

WARF! WARF! WARF! WARF!
YEAH, ALL RIGHT, MATE, ALL RIGHT... FUCKIN' HELL...

OH.
BOLLOCKS.

ALL RIGHT?
TEN-HUT, TROOPER!
FUCK RIGHT OFF.

SAY, THEY'RE GIVIN' ME A CAMEO IN THE WEBWEAVER PREQUEL...I GET TO SAVE SOME COOZE...
HOW D'YOU DO THAT, D'YOU HAVE TO OPEN AN ACCOUNT OR SOMETHIN'? LISTEN, HAVE YOU HEARD FROM MAEVE?

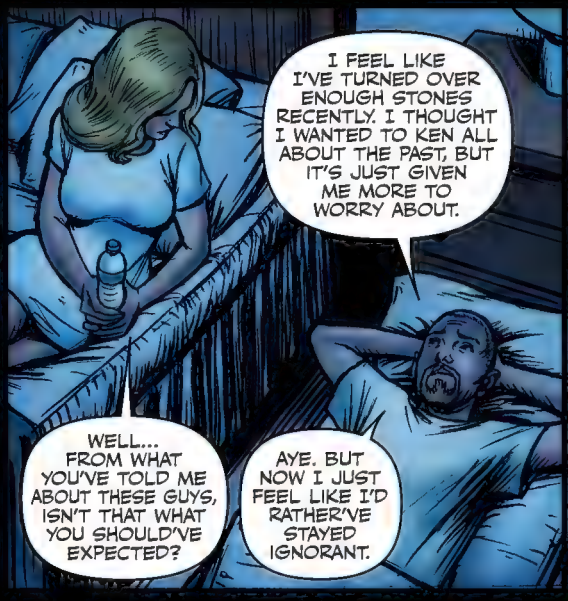
NO...
BUGS'VE ALL JUST QUIT ON US. NOT SHUT DOWN, LIKE WHEN SHE KILLS THE SIGNAL BEFORE A SWEEP--GONE.

ALL OF 'EM...?
CONFERENCE ROOM, KITCHEN, HOMELANDER'S KHAZI. LOOKS LIKE THEY ALL WENT AT ONCE.
NOW WHAT THE HELL DOES THAT MEAN--?
EITHER THEY WENT ON THE FRITZ AT THE SAME TIME, WHICH IS UNLIKELY, OR SHE WAS TOO PISSED TO REMEMBER THERE WAS A SWEEP COMIN'--
WHICH'D BE A GODDAMN FIRST...
OR THEY GOT HER.
"DO ME A FAVOR AN' FIND OUT WHICH IT IS, EH?"

WHY NOT CONFRONT HIM?
YOUR BOSS, WHATSIZNAME...
MM?

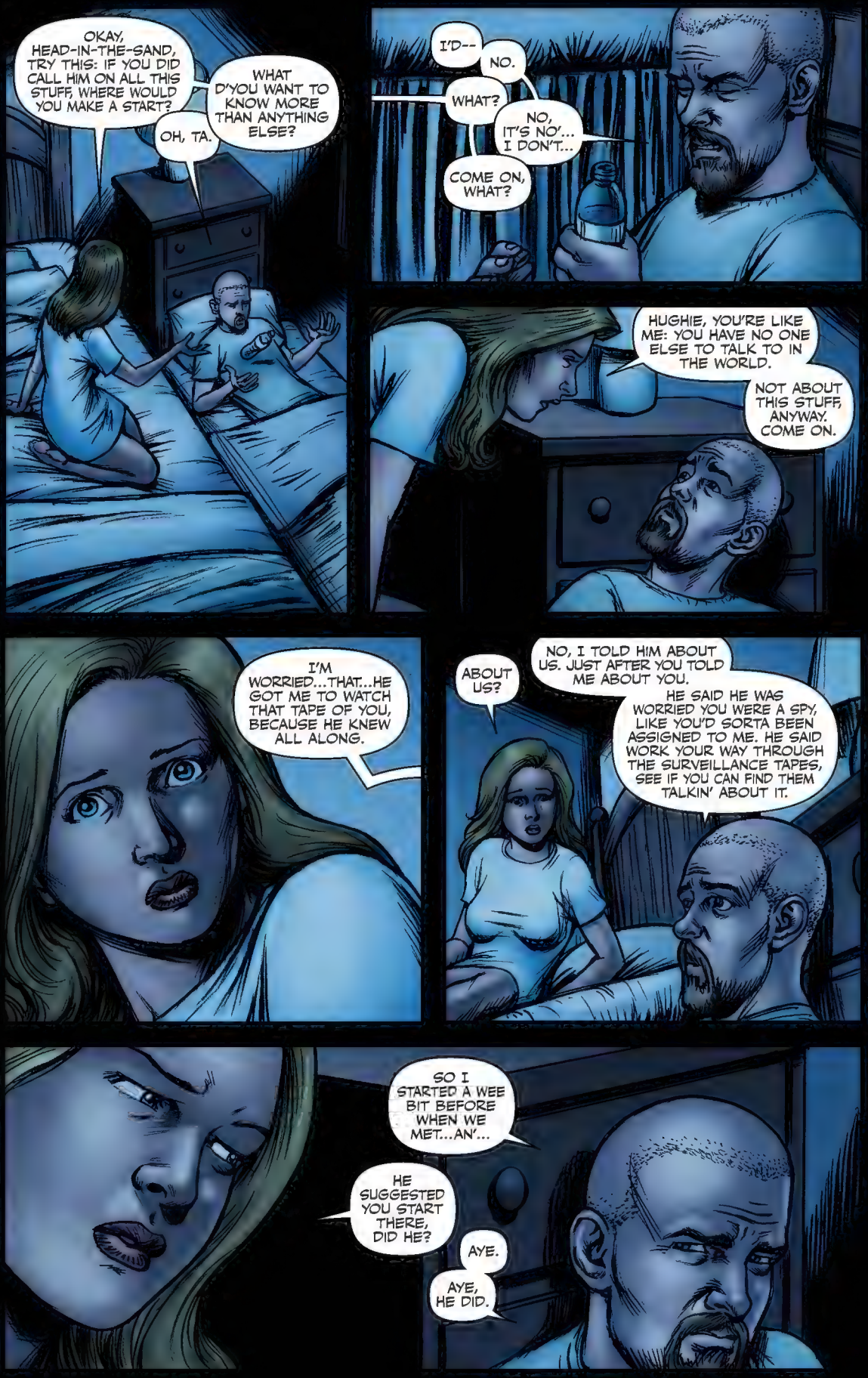
HIS NAME I'VE NEVER MENTIONED ONCE, YOU MEAN.
I KNOW, I KNOW. KEEP HER OUT OF THE LOOP, DON'T LET HER GET HER FINGERS BURNT.
BUT IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THIS WORLD BEING THE WAY IT IS, IF YOU THINK HE'S ACTUALLY CONTRIBUTING TO IT: WHY DON'T YOU JUST COME OUT AND ASK HIM? ABOUT WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

BECAUSE...I'M SCARED TO.
IN CASE ALL THESE WEE SUSPICIONS I'VE GOT TURN OUT TO BE TRUE.


I FEEL LIKE I'VE TURNED OVER ENOUGH STONES RECENTLY. I THOUGHT I WANTED TO KEN ALL ABOUT THE PAST, BUT IT'S JUST GIVEN ME MORE TO WORRY ABOUT.
WELL... FROM WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME ABOUT THESE GUYS, ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU SHOULD'VE EXPECTED?
AYE. BUT NOW I JUST FEEL LIKE I'D RATHER'VE STAYED IGNORANT.

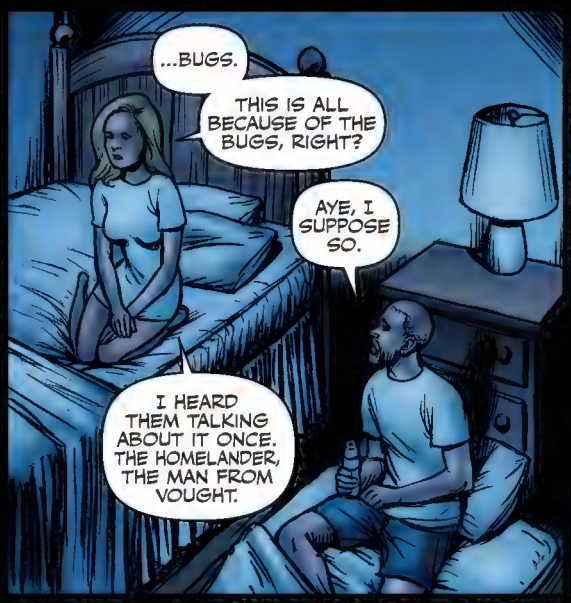
I DON'T WANT TO PISS YOU OFF HERE, I'M NOT TRYING TO CATCH YOU IN A CONTRADICTION. THIS IS JUST DEVIL'S ADVOCATE.
YOU SAID YOU THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS, BUT YOU'RE ALSO AFRAID TO INVESTIGATE THE SITUATION. DOES THAT MEAN YOU WANT TO JUST WAIT AND LET STUFF HAPPEN?

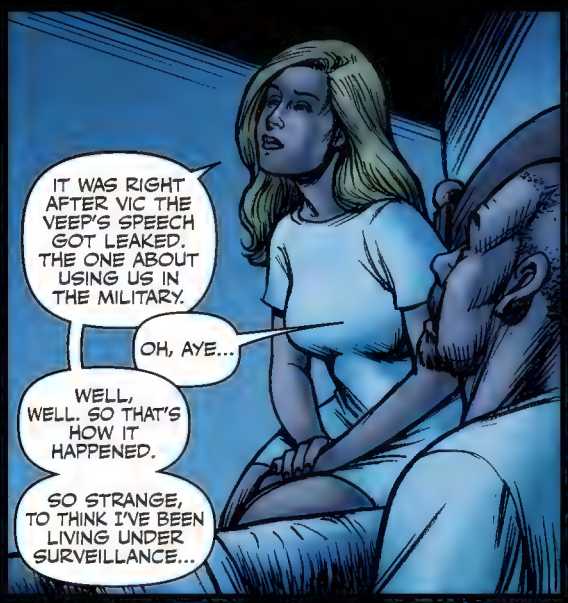
LIKE...FIND OUT THE HARD WAY?
WELL, THAT CERTAINLY SOUNDS LIKE ME, AYE.
KEEP EVERYTHIN' NEAT AN' TIDY, UNTIL IT ALL FALLS APART.


OKAY, HEAD-IN-THE-SAND, TRY THIS: IF YOU DID CALL HIM ON ALL THIS STUFF, WHERE WOULD YOU MAKE A START?
WHAT D'YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE?
OH, TA.
I'D--
NO.
WHAT?
NO, IT'S NO'... I DON'T...
COME ON, WHAT?
HUGHIE, YOU'RE LIKE ME: YOU HAVE NO ONE ELSE TO TALK TO IN THE WORLD.
NOT ABOUT THIS STUFF, ANYWAY. COME ON.
I'M WORRIED...THAT...HE GOT ME TO WATCH THAT TAPE OF YOU, BECAUSE HE KNEW ALL ALONG.
ABOUT US?
NO, I TOLD HIM ABOUT US. JUST AFTER YOU TOLD ME ABOUT YOU.
HE SAID HE WAS WORRIED YOU WERE A SPY, LIKE YOU'D SORTA BEEN ASSIGNED TO ME. HE SAID WORK YOUR WAY THROUGH THE SURVEILLANCE TAPES, SEE IF YOU CAN FIND THEM TALKIN' ABOUT IT.
SO I STARTED A WEE BIT BEFORE WHEN WE MET...AN'...
HE SUGGESTED YOU START THERE, DID HE?
AYE.
AYE, HE DID.

HE SOUNDS LIKE A WONDERFUL MAN.
ANNIE, DON'T EVEN *THINK* ABOUT HAVIN' A GO AT THIS GUY. I'M FUCKIN' SERIOUS, RIGHT?

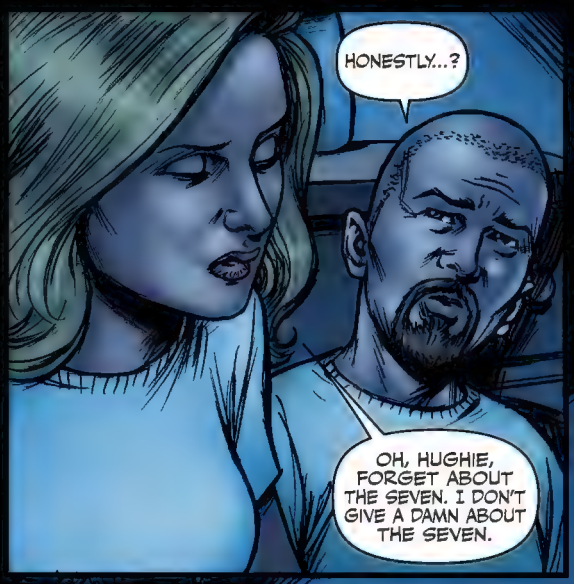
I MEAN I'M NO' EVEN SURE IT WAS DELIBERATE, IT IS THE LOGICAL PLACE TO START...
UH-HUH.

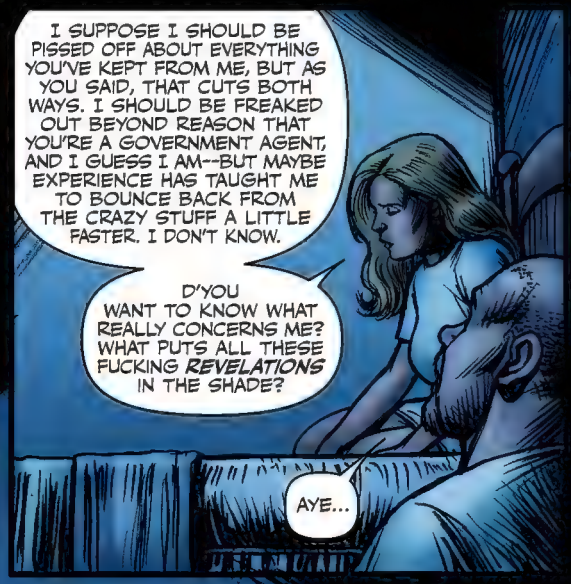

...BUGS.
THIS IS ALL BECAUSE OF THE BUGS, RIGHT?
AYE, I SUPPOSE SO.
I HEARD THEM TALKING ABOUT IT ONCE. THE HOMELANDER, THE MAN FROM VOUGHT.


IT WAS RIGHT AFTER VIC THE VEEP'S SPEECH GOT LEAKED. THE ONE ABOUT USING US IN THE MILITARY.
OH, AYE...
WELL, WELL. SO THAT'S HOW IT HAPPENED.
SO STRANGE, TO THINK I'VE BEEN LIVING UNDER SURVEILLANCE...

I WAS GONNA ASK YOU WHAT YOU THOUGHT ABOUT THAT.
I MEAN IT WAS YOUR HOME, THEY WERE YOUR...YOU KNEW THEM. AN' I'M ONE O' THE BOYS IS WATCHIN' THEM TWENTY-FOUR/SEVEN.
THEY'RE A BUNCH OF DESPICABLE PIGS.

THE ONLY ONE WHO SHOWED ME ANY KIND OF HUMANITY AT ALL WAS MAEVE, AND I DON'T CARE ABOUT HER BECAUSE SHE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT HERSELF.
IF YOU WANT TO TAKE THEM DOWN, YOU DO IT.

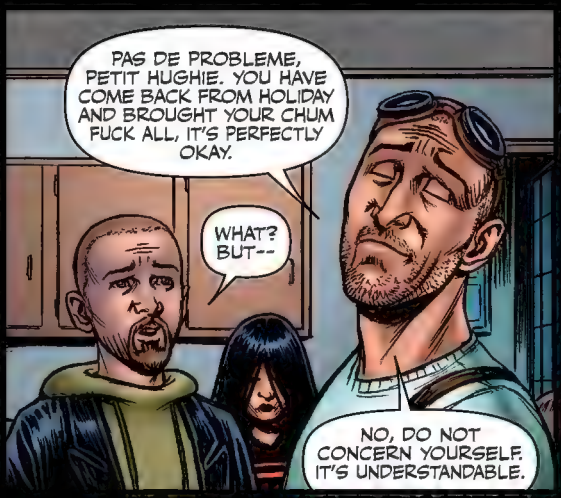

HONESTLY...?
OH, HUGHIE, FORGET ABOUT THE SEVEN. I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THE SEVEN.

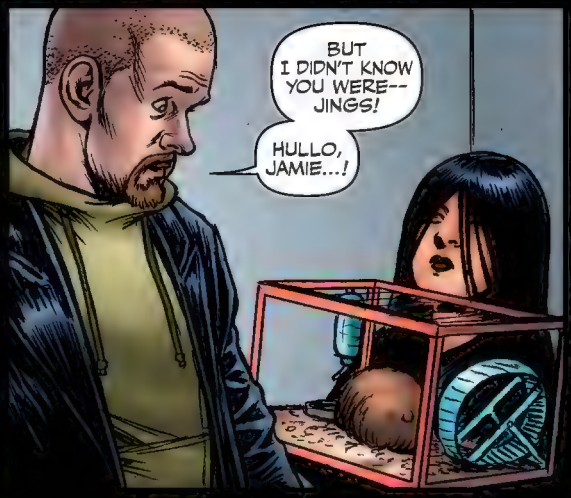

I SUPPOSE I SHOULD BE PISSED OFF ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU'VE KEPT FROM ME, BUT AS YOU SAID, THAT CUTS BOTH WAYS. I SHOULD BE FREAKED OUT BEYOND REASON THAT YOU'RE A GOVERNMENT AGENT, AND I GUESS I AM--BUT MAYBE EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT ME TO BOUNCE BACK FROM THE CRAZY STUFF A LITTLE FASTER. I DON'T KNOW.
D'YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT REALLY CONCERNS ME? WHAT PUTS ALL THESE FUCKING REVELATIONS IN THE SHADE?
AYE...

COME IN.
JUST TO SLEEP.

PLEASE.

PETIT HUGHIE! BACK FROM ELBA!
EH?
MON EMPEROR!
HNNGHH--!
EN AVANT. MON BRAVE!
C'EST "BASTARDS OF THE DEEP" ON THE IMAGINARY CHANNEL!
THAT'S-- AYE--NICE ONE, FRENCHIE--
NOW: OU EST MON PRESENT?
PRESENT...?
AH, OUI. YOU HAVE TRAVELED FAR, NON? NOW YOU RETURN, AND BEAR WITH YOU A PRESENT FOR YOUR OLD AMI.
ER...
...CARCHARODON TRIPLODON, WHOSE NUMBER ONE FOOD SOURCE WOULD PRESUMABLY CONSIST OF... HUMAN BEINGS...


PAS DE PROBLEME, PETIT HUGHIE. YOU HAVE COME BACK FROM HOLIDAY AND BROUGHT YOUR CHUM FUCK ALL, IT'S PERFECTLY OKAY.
WHAT? BUT--
NO, DO NOT CONCERN YOURSELF. IT'S UNDERSTANDABLE.


BUT I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE-- JINGS!
HULLO, JAMIE...!

JESUS, HEN, WHAT'VE YOU BEEN FEEDIN' HIM? HE'S FAT AS FUCK!
AH, LA FEMME, GUARDIAN OF VOTRE HAMSTER. VOUS AVEZ A PRESENT FOR HER, PERHAPS?

I HONESTLY DIDN'T...THINK THAT...
IT IS THE WAY OF THINGS, IN THESE HARSH TIMES.

GET ME SOMETHIN'?
I NEVER BLOODY THOUGHT YOU--
KIDDIN'.

WELCOME HOME.
ANCHOR STEAM
Made in San Francisco

AW, THANKS, MATE...!
GOOD TRIP?
'COURSE IT WAS. RIGHT LITTLE VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY, WASN'T IT, HUGHIE?

EH?
YOU WAS SAYIN' YESTERDAY YOU DONE A LOT O' THINKIN'. BUT NOW YOU'RE READY TO COME BACK.
GOT YER PLACE AT POTAMUS' AGAIN?

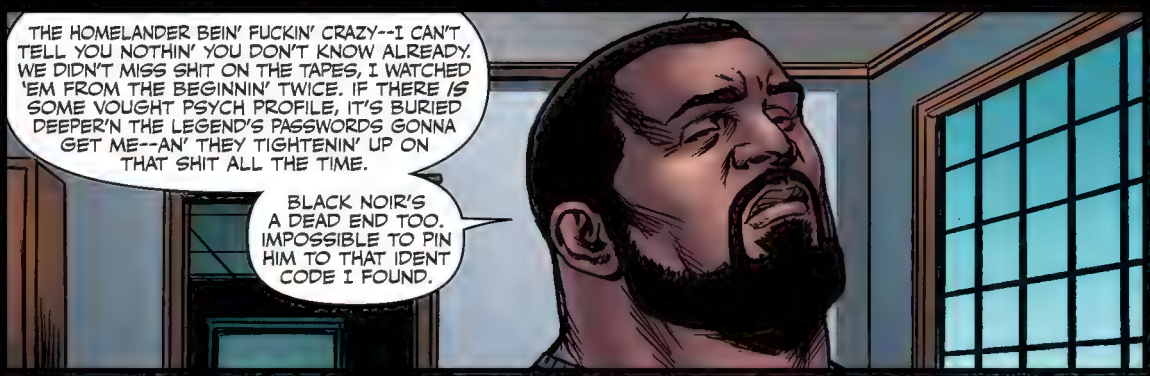
AYE, I HAVE, AYE. NO BOTHER, HE HELD ONTO IT FOR ME ANYWAY.
I WAS MOSTLY JUST, YOU KNOW--
I DOUBT HE HAD THAT MANY BODS DESPERATE TO MOVE IN, MATE. YOU'VE GOTTA MOVE SOMEWHERE DECENT, GET YERSELF OUTTA THAT FUCKIN' CRAWLSPACE.
HERE--

STICK THIS UNDER YER BEER OR THE BIG LAD'LL HAVE YER BOLLOCKS FOR MARBLES.
RIGHT THEN.

EVERYBODY READY TO GET BACK TO WORK?

COME ON, FRENCHIE, YER PROGRAM'S OVER...
NON.
C'MON, BE A SPORT, EH?
SHAN'T.

OH, BIEN SUR.
HUGHIE AN' ME'LL HANDLE THE THING WITH JACK, I DON'T THINK IT NEEDS ANYONE ELSE FOR THE TIME BEIN'. HOW'S IT COMIN' AT YOUR END?
IT AIN'T.

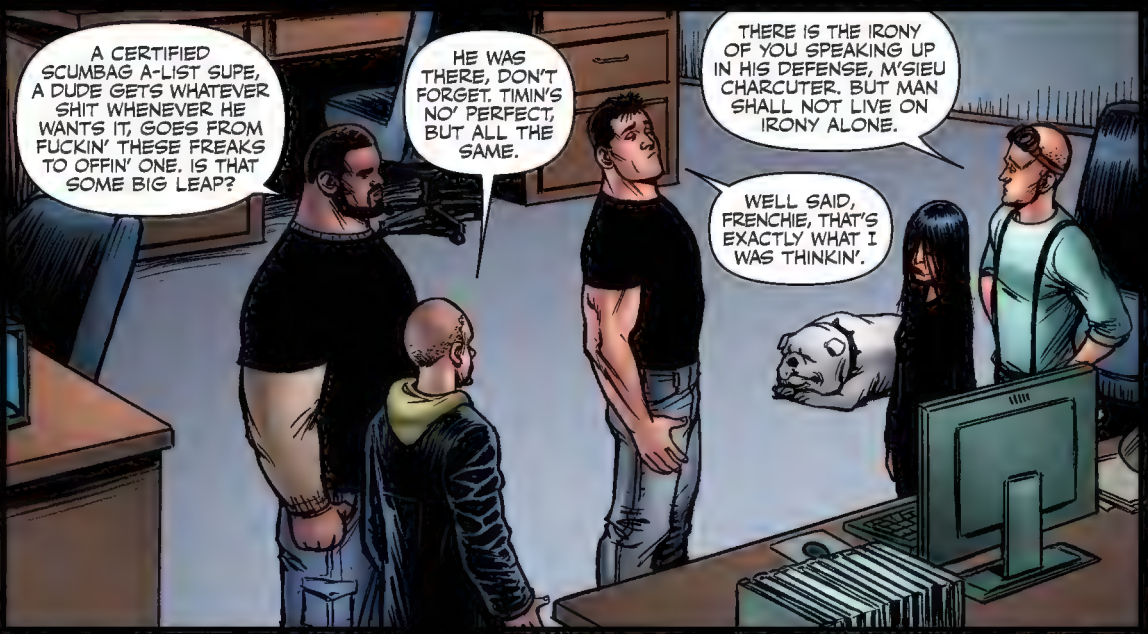

THE HOMELANDER BEIN' FUCKIN' CRAZY--I CAN'T TELL YOU NOTHIN' YOU DON'T KNOW ALREADY. WE DIDN'T MISS SHIT ON THE TAPES, I WATCHED 'EM FROM THE BEGINNIN' TWICE. IF THERE *IS* SOME VOUGHT PSYCH PROFILE, IT'S BURIED DEEPER'N THE LEGEND'S PASSWORDS GONNA GET ME--AN' THEY TIGHTENIN' UP ON THAT SHIT ALL THE TIME.
BLACK NOIR'S A DEAD END TOO. IMPOSSIBLE TO PIN HIM TO THAT IDENT CODE I FOUND.

BLACK NOIR...?
NOTHIN'.
FRENCHIE, THE BUGS'RE STILL OUT, SORRY. YOU'LL BE AT A BIT OF A LOOSE END 'TIL I CAN GET 'EM SORTED.
PERHAPS WE SHOULD JOIN IN ON JACQUES DE JUPITER AFTER ALL...

HUH.

TU A DIT WE WOULD BE HAVING A GO...
THAT I DID.
WORSE WAYS IN THAN THIS, I GOTTA SAY.
THAT THERE ARE.

WAIT A MINUTE, A GO AT THE SEVEN--?
TAKE HIM OUT FOR A BITE AFTER THIS AN' GET HIM UP TO DATE, EH?
SURE.
I JUST DON'T LIKE HOW HANDY IT IS. I DON'T LIKE THAT IT DON'T FIT JACK.


A CERTIFIED SCUMBAG A-LIST SUPE, A DUDE GETS WHATEVER SHIT WHENEVER HE WANTS IT, GOES FROM FUCKIN' THESE FREAKS TO OFFIN' ONE. IS THAT SOME BIG LEAP?
HE WAS THERE, DON'T FORGET. TIMIN'S NO' PERFECT, BUT ALL THE SAME.
THERE IS THE IRONY OF YOU SPEAKING UP IN HIS DEFENSE, M'SIEU CHARCUTER. BUT MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON IRONY ALONE.
WELL SAID, FRENCHIE, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WAS THINKIN'.

SEE IF IT DID TURN OUT TO BE JACK? WHAT WOULD OUR FIRST MOVE BE?
STICK THIS ON YOUTUBE, I SUPPOSE.

CARPO!!

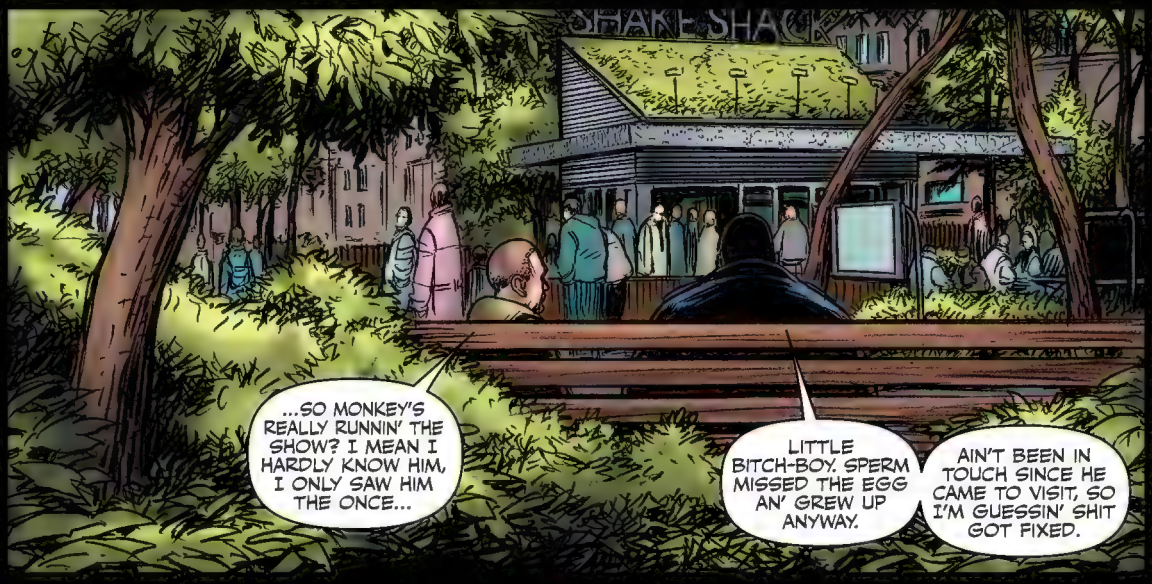
AWH--!
COME ON, BITCHES, FUCK ME INTO GLLOMFF
TURN IT OFF, FOR FUCK'S SAKE...!

AW, THAT'S REALLY HORRIBLE...
HEH HEH HEH.
IS THAT HIS WORD, THEN? CARPO, IS THAT ALL IT IS?

OUI, MON BRAVE. IF THE MOMENT EVER COMES, REMOVE HIS HEAD BEFORE THE SECOND SYLLABLE.
AYE, WELL AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, A FELLA INTO SHITE LIKE THAT'D STOP AT NOTHIN'...
YEAH, WELL, IT ALL MAKES SENSE. IT'S JUST WHAT WE NEED.
IT'S HANDY, LIKE I SAID.

BUT YOU STILL AIN'T BUYIN' IT...
I DUNNO.
MAYBE IT'S JUST ME BEIN' DAFT; I ALWAYS THOUGHT WHEN THE TIME CAME IT'D BE THE HOMELANDER. WE'D USE THE STUFF WE'VE GOT ON HIM AN' TAKE THE WHOLE THING NUCLEAR STRAIGHT AWAY.

I JUST...
I WISH I COULD GET THE IDEA OUT O' ME HEAD THAT WE'RE ALL BEIN' TAKEN FOR A RIDE.


SHAKE SHACK
...SO MONKEY'S REALLY RUNNIN' THE SHOW? I MEAN I HARDLY KNOW HIM, I ONLY SAW HIM THE ONCE...
LITTLE BITCH-BOY. SPERM MISSED THE EGG AN' GREW UP ANYWAY.
AIN'T BEEN IN TOUCH SINCE HE CAME TO VISIT, SO I'M GUESSIN' SHIT GOT FIXED.

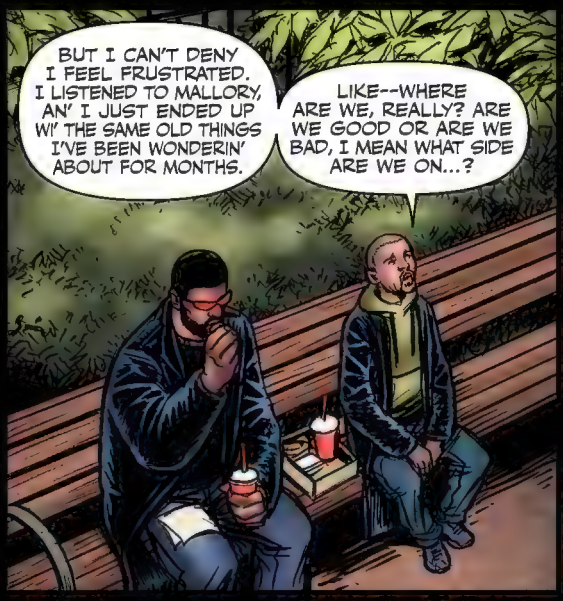
YOU MEAN... *TERMINALLY*, LIKE...?
I MEAN FIXED LIKE BUTCHER GOT TO HIM, NO MORE. HE DON'T WET EVERY FOOL PISSES HIM OFF, OR WE'D BE NECK-DEEP IN BODIES.

OH.
IT'S JUST...
WELL. I HEARD HOW JONAH VOGELBAUM REALLY DIED, YOU SEE. IT WAS BUTCHER DID IT, HE NEVER KILLED HIMSELF AT ALL.

YEAH?
AYE.
HOW 'BOUT THAT.
AN' A LOT OF OTHER STUFF AN' ALL.

HOW'S THE COLONEL DOIN' THESE DAYS?
HUNKY-FUCKIN'-DORY.
HE SAID YOU WANTED ME TO KNOW THE TRUTH, BUT YOU'RE NO' GONNA BOLLOCKS UP YOUR GO AT VOUGHT.

SOUNDS ABOUT RIGHT.
SO YOU'LL PUT UP WI' STUFF, WILL YOU?
LIKE...YOUR FLASK...?
LEMME SAY THIS AS PLAINLY AS I CAN, 'CAUSE THE WAY YOU TALKIN' RIGHT NOW, YOU KINDA DANCIN' AROUND SHIT: I AIN'T AFRAIDA BUTCHER.
UH
WE CLEAR ON THAT?
AYE
HUGHIE...
I FIGURED YOU OUGHTA HEAR THINGS FROM THE OLD MAN'S PERSPECTIVE. BUT WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN HIM AN' BUTCHER MAKES IT HARD, WHICH IS HOW COME I PLAYED IT THE WAY I DID.
ANYTHING ELSE IS MY BUSINESS. OKAY?
AYE.
SORRY.
SO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU KNOW, AN' HERE YOU ARE.
HOW COME YOU BACK AGAIN, AN' WHAT IS IT YOU WANNA DO?
HEH. I WAS TALKIN', I WAS THINKIN' ABOUT THAT LAST NIGHT.
I WAS THINKIN' HOW I SEEM TO KEEP ASKIN' QUESTIONS AN' THEN JUST BACKIN' OFF.

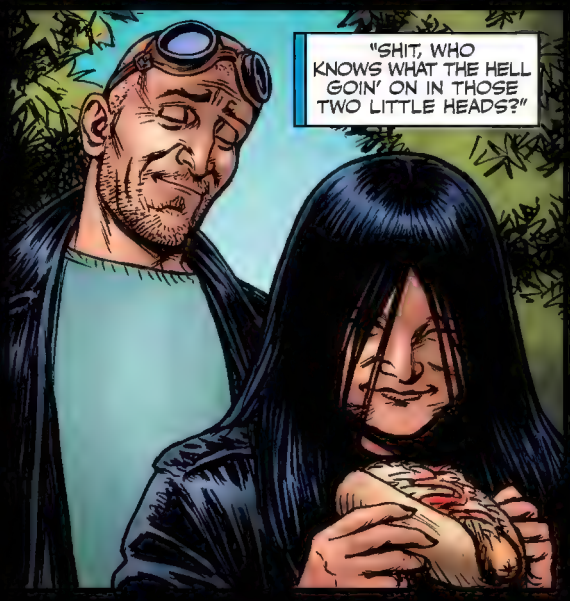

BUT I CAN'T DENY I FEEL FRUSTRATED. I LISTENED TO MALLORY, AN' I JUST ENDED UP WI' THE SAME OLD THINGS I'VE BEEN WONDERIN' ABOUT FOR MONTHS.
LIKE--WHERE ARE WE, REALLY? ARE WE GOOD OR ARE WE BAD, I MEAN WHAT SIDE ARE WE ON...?

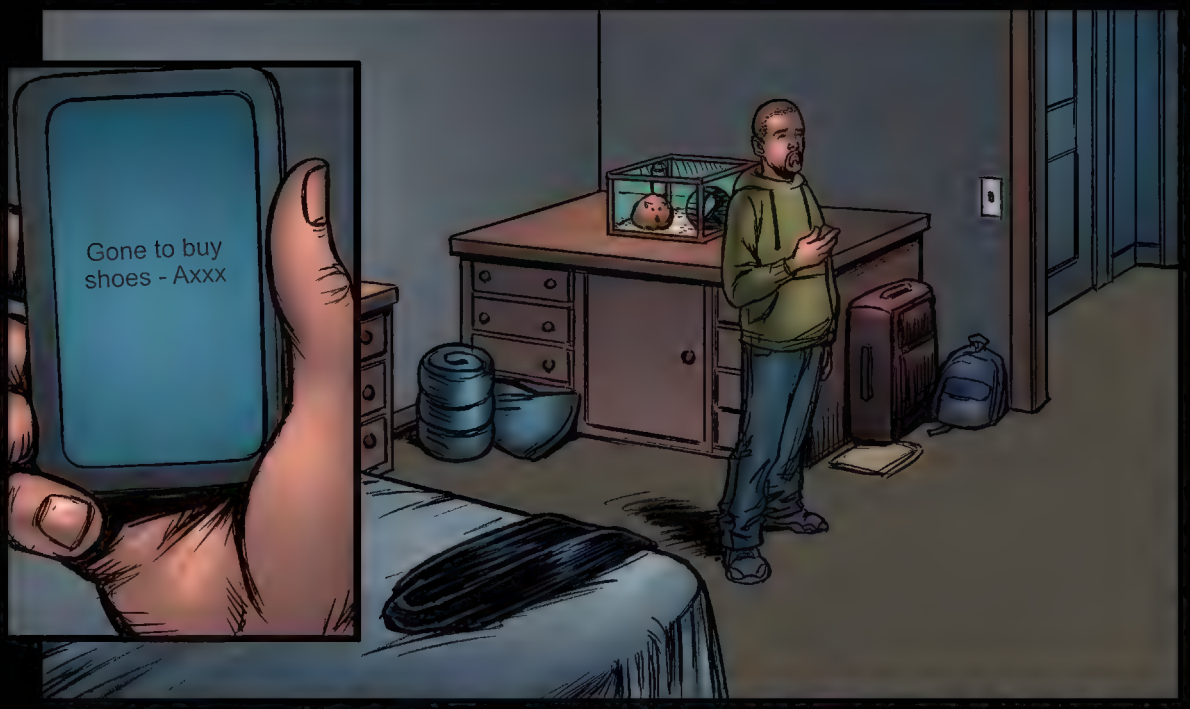
MMF--
WE ON THE SIDE THAT FUCKS UP SUPES. THAT DON'T ANSWER THE PART ABOUT GOOD OR BAD, YOU AIN'T BEEN PAYIN' ATTENTION.

OUTSIDE A' THAT, HUGHIE, ALL I CAN SAY IS YOU'RE GONNA EVENTUALLY HAVE TO SHIT OR GET OFF THE POT.
OR GO COMPLETELY FUCKIN' CRAZY. 'NOTHER WAY TO COPE RIGHT THERE.

EH? OH.

BUT WERE THE TWO O' THEM NO' MENTAL TO BEGIN WI', LIKE?
MAYBE. YOU HAIR-SPLITTIN' MUTHAFUCKA.


"SHIT, WHO KNOWS WHAT THE HELL GOIN' ON IN THOSE TWO LITTLE HEADS?"


Gone to buy shoes - Axxx

OCH--!

AWLLP--!
ULLBB
AWWHHPP
FUCK!!
JESUS CHRIST.
JUST WHAT I BLOODY NEEDED.

Transcript QM/L #1 1/19/98 (p.c.)

(cont) like old times, sweetheart. Daddy and his little girl sure did have themselves some fun back then, huh? (Pause) Not talking? Listen, honey plum, I think I know why you're so mad at the son of a bitch. Now, don't get those pretty pink panties in a twist, but is it anything to do with those pictures?

QM: What?

L: You know, of you and him. I mean it is him, right, he's got to be the one sent them around.

QM: Sent them around where?

L: Well, someone gave Daddy a set when he was at Victory. Some of the guys on the board at Vought had them. But don't you worry, Daddy burned them. Daddy always knows what to do. And if you're serious about getting back at that prick, I have some people you might like to

QM: Is it safe here? I mean, are we being discrete?

L: Well hell, sugar-pussy, you ought to know that better than anyone. How many problems have they taken care of here for you? And remember that mess when super-kraut thought he had an heir, and the Doc even made that go away?

QM: I'm just not sure.

L: You don't want to go to Daddy's place, with those moldy old comic books all piled up. Come on, this is perfect. Ain't no one talks about who they ran into visiting a Goddamn cathouse.

QM: But when I think about the people I've been here with, some of the things I (cont)

next: THOUGH THE HEAVENS FALL

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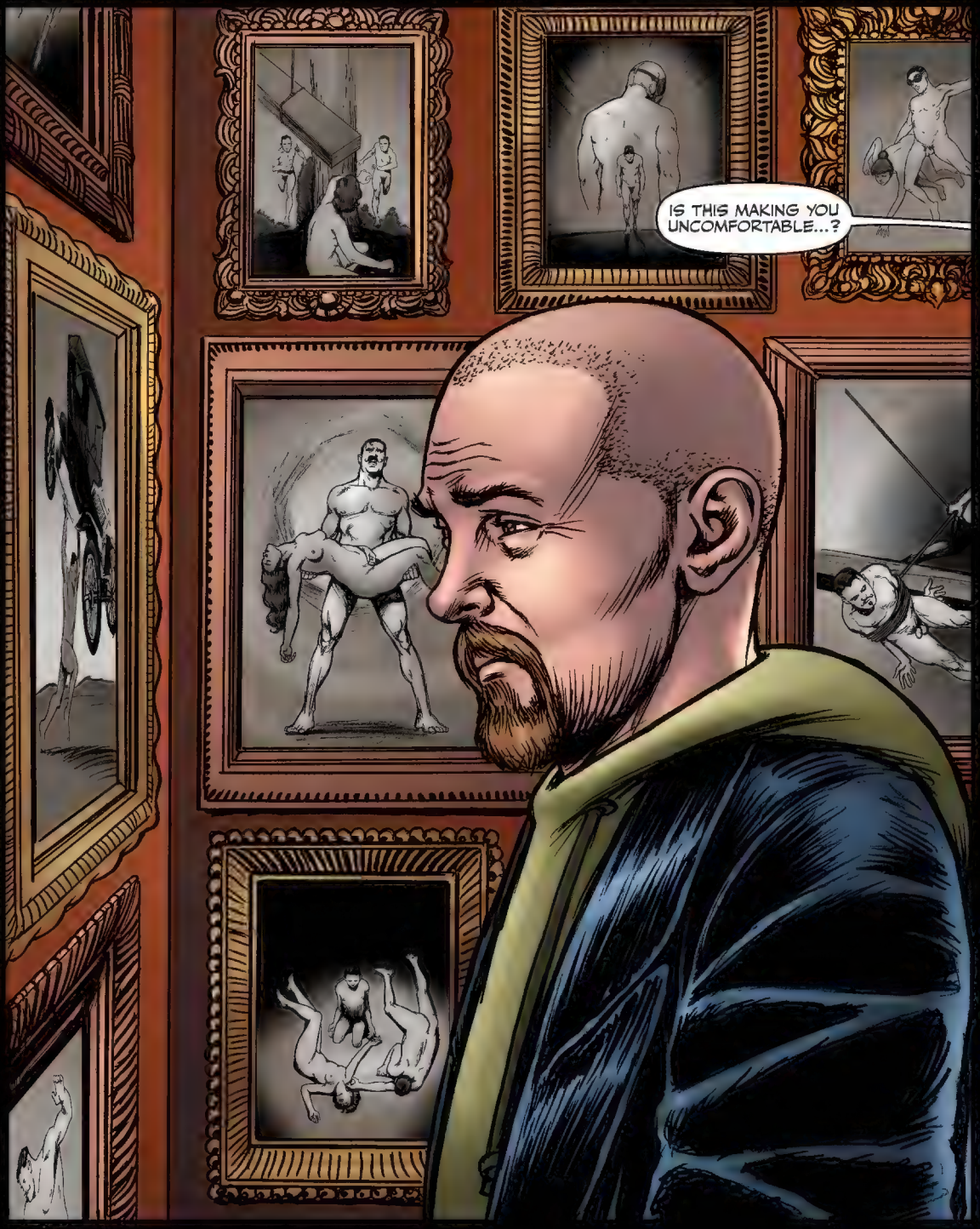
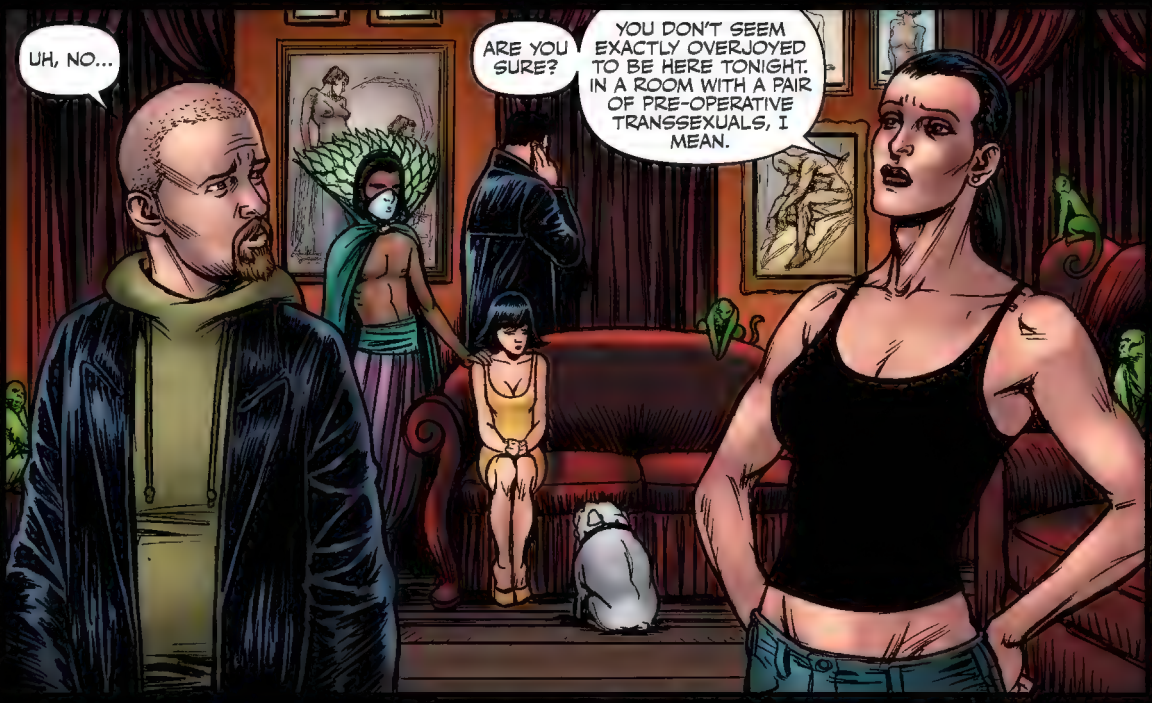


THE BIG RIDE

part three


UH, NO...
ARE YOU SURE?
YOU DON'T SEEM EXACTLY OVERJOYED TO BE HERE TONIGHT. IN A ROOM WITH A PAIR OF PRE-OPERATIVE TRANSSEXUALS, I MEAN.

WELL, ALL RIGHT, I SUPPOSE IT IS MAKIN' ME UNCOMFORTABLE. MAY AS WELL BE HONEST, EH?
WHY NOT. BUT IMAGINE HOW UNCOMFORTABLE WE FEEL: OUR FRIEND'S BEEN MURDERED, AND THE N.Y.P.D.'S SENSE OF PRIORITY EXTENDS AS FAR AS SENDING TWO BRITISH EXCHANGE OFFICERS.
SO SHOW A LITTLE SENSITIVITY AND STOP LURKING OVER HERE IN THE CORNER, MM?

ALL RIGHT, JESUS CHRIST. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SUCH A...
LITTLE SLIT ABOUT IT? ONLY WAY I KNOW HOW TO BE, SWEETIE-PIE.

...AN' THEN THERE WAS THREE.
YOU MUST BE MADELAINE. C'MON AN' HAVE A SEAT AN' WE'LL GET STUCK IN, MY SON.

SO: JACK TURNS UP AT EIGHT. HE WANTS THREE O' YOU RATHER'N FOUR, SO YER MATE ANASTASIA GOES HOME ABOUT EIGHT-THIRTY. JACK LEAVES AT ONE IN THE MORNIN'.
SO FAR SO GOOD?
YES.
MM.
THAT'S IT.

WHY WAS ANASTASIA THE ONE TO GO? THERE ANYTHING BETWEEN THE TWO O' THEM, ONE WAY OR THE OTHER?
NO.
NOTHING AT ALL.
WELL...

WELL WHAT?
I GOT THE IMPRESSION HE WAS KIND OF SWEET ON HER. FOR A WHILE, ANYHOW.
RECENTLY, NOT SO MUCH.
DIDN'T SAY NOTHIN' ABOUT IT WHEN THE OFFICERS TALKED TO YOU THE OTHER DAY, MADS.

IT'S JUST HOW IT SEEMED TO ME, THINKING THINGS OVER SINCE. DIDN'T REALLY OCCUR TO ME BEFORE.
SO WHEN DID YOU DEVELOP THIS IMPRESSION HE WAS SWEET ON ANI, EXACTLY? WHEN THE TWO OF YOU WERE GIVING HIM A DOUBLE-ANAL, DID IT SEEM LIKE HE LIKED HER JUST A LITTLE BIT BETTER?

WHAT THE FUCK IS YOUR PROBLEM--?
WHAT THE FUCK IS YOURS?
I'VE BEEN WITH YOU AND ANI AND JENNA EVERY TIME THAT LITTLE GOBLIN'S BEEN HERE, AND I DON'T RECALL HIM SHOWING THE SLIGHTEST BIT OF AFFECTION FOR ANY OF US. I CERTAINLY DON'T RECALL YOU MENTIONING THIS EVEN ONCE.

YES, WELL MAYBE AN' DIDN'T TELL YOU EVERYTHING, TABITHA...
BUT HE TOLD YOU SOMETHIN', DID HE? 'COS THAT'S AN INTERESTIN' NEW DEVELOPMENT.

I DIDN'T SAY *SHE* DID. I JUST--
LOOK, I'M TRYING TO HELP YOU HERE, OKAY?
YEAH, YOU ARE. YOU'RE GIVIN' US A LINK BETWEEN THE VICTIM AN' THE SUSPECT, WHICH IS EXACTLY WHAT COPS LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT.
WHICH HAS BEEN THE PROBLEM WI' THIS SINCE THE BEGINNIN', REALLY.

WE KEEP GETTIN' WHATEVER WE NEED TO GO AFTER JACK FROM JUPITER.
GOOD POINT, CONSTABLE CAMPBELL.
DOC, I WONDER IF YOU'D BE SO GOOD AS TO READ YOUNG MADELINE HIS HOROSCOPE?

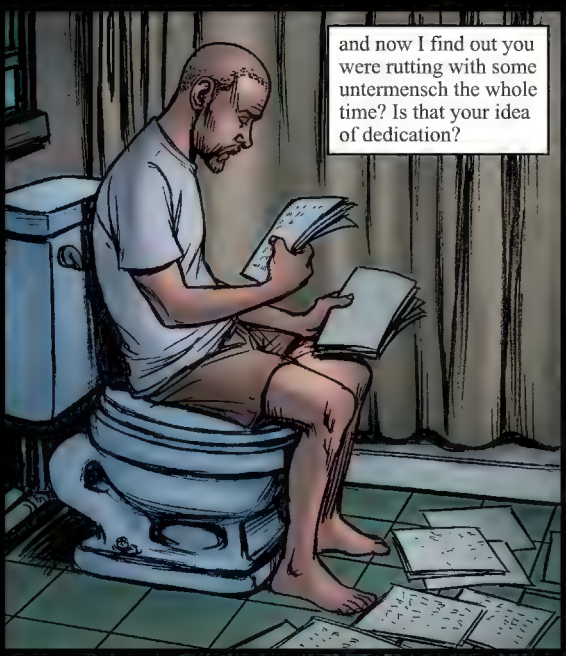
WE'LL GIVE 'EM A MINUTE, THEN.
THERE'S SOMETHIN' I'VE BEEN WONDERIN' ABOUT WI' THIS FELLA...

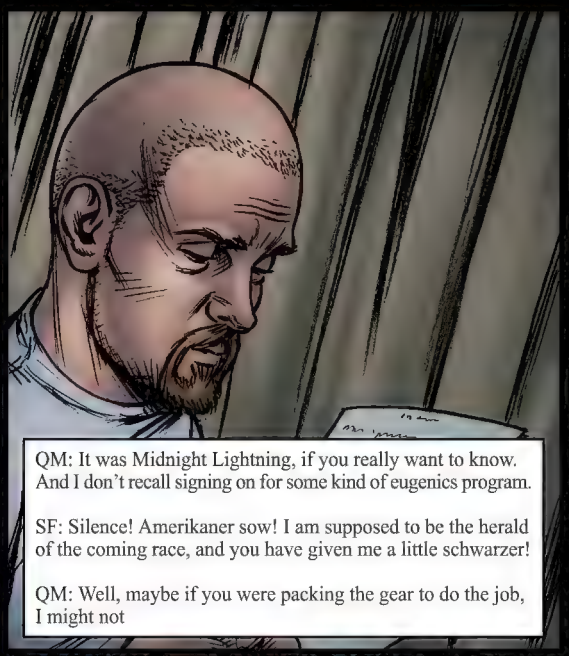
IF HE'S GOT SO MUCH DIRT ON EVERYONE, WHY DO WE NO' GO TO HIM ALL THE TIME? I MEAN WI' THEM FILES O' HIS, WE COULDA SORTED OUT SWINGWING AN' TEK-KNIGHT LIKE *THAT*...
DIRT ON EVERYONE, YEAH. INCLUDIN' A COUPLE O' THE PEOPLE SIGN OUR CHECKS.

THIS IS A SPECIAL CASE, MATE, THE DOC KNOWS THAT AS WELL AS I DO. BUT THERE ARE LIMITS.
THAT'S WHY I PREFER THE LEGEND--
YEEOW!

OH NO! NO! DOCTOR, PLEASE--!
WHAT THE FUCK--?
OH, THIS IS BAD NEWS FOR YOUNG MADS, HUGHIE.
DOC PECULIAR DON'T LIKE HIS BOYS USIN'.
THAT SAID, I BET YOU'VE GOT A NICE BIG SYRINGE FULL O' SMACK AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE, AIN'T YOU, DOC? GO AN' GET IT FOR US, WILL YOU?
WHAT?!
'COS I'M GONNA BANG IT INTO THIS LITTLE CUNT'S ARM, AN' THEN WE'RE GONNA SEE WHAT'S WHAT.
YOU'RE NOT COPS...
'COURSE WE ARE, SUNSHINE.
YOU TALKED TO US, DIDN'T YOU?

Transcript QM/SF #8 2/13/88


and now I find out you were rutting with some untermensch the whole time? Is that your idea of dedication?


QM: It was Midnight Lightning, if you really want to know. And I don't recall signing on for some kind of eugenics program.
SF: Silence! Amerikaner sow! I am supposed to be the herald of the coming race, and you have given me a little schwarzer!
QM: Well, maybe if you were packing the gear to do the job, I might not

Transcript QM/SM/IL/PG #33 4/11/90
IL: It's nice when we can get together, just us girls. We don't do it often enough.
SM: Oh, that's good. That's really fucking good. That's better than the usual (indistinct)
PG: The doc always gets the best stuff.
QM: It's even better if you put a little on here like this, and then--okay, brace yourself--
AW JESUS, THERE'S NO END TO IT...

AN' THERE'S FUCK ALL'S GONNA TELL ME ANYTHIN'.
HHHH.
Transcript HL (cell outgoing) 12/2/97
HL: It's me. We're on. Get your ass down here now, like at fucking warp speed. And remember to use the window, it'll be third from the front on the east side, doc's floor.
WHAT'RE YOU DOIN' IN HER FILE, SCUMBAG...?
HL: Can you hear me? Did you hear what I said? She's here, she's warming up with a couple of cavemen. I've got about a pound of the doc's best shit. Oh Jesus, don't start with the laughing, not now. This is the moment we've been waiting for.
Look, if you're worried, don't be. She's not going to know until way too late, trust me, I'll take care of it. Just trust me, okay, I promise. It's going to be okay. It's going to be fucking great. Hello?
HL: She'll never know, she won't figure it out until afterwards. We're the same size and everything, it's just too fucking good to be true. It's going to be hilarious.
Okay, I'll take the heavy breathing as a yes. I'll see you soon. Third from the front on the east side. Don't fuck it up or we'll never get another shot.

AW, FUCK--!
FUCKIN' BASTARD.
FUCKER.
Transcript HL/QM/BN #14 12/2/97
QM: You evil fuck! You piece of shit! You cocksucker!
HL: Calm down.

1.

Transcript HL/QM/BN #14 12/2/97

QM: You evil fuck! You piece of shit! You cocksucker!

HL: Calm down.

QM: Calm down my ass! I'll fucking kill you both, you and this brain-dead ape of yours! Don't you fucking laugh at me! Asshole! Cocksucker! Prick!

HL: You'll let us know when you're finished, won't you?

QM: Fuck you! I trusted you! I must have been out of my mind, you made me a fucking laughing stock the last time! You made me into a Goddamn porno exhibition for those motherfuckers at Vought, and now you make me fuck this fucking zombie!

HL: Nobody made

QM: Don't even fucking try that shit! What were you thinking? What kind of sick fucking evil goes through that head of yours?

HL: You really want to know?

QM: Do I--do I want--yes! Yes, I want to know!

HL: I thought, enough time's gone by, I bet I can convince her I'm truly sorry. The stupid whore's in love with me anyway, she wants to think it was a bad thing I did when I was immature but I'm a better person now. Then I'll get her to do something really fucked up. The end.

QM: This isn't happening. This can't

HL: Let's get Maeve to fuck Black Noir, that'll be good for a laugh.

QM: Fucking asshole! Fucking overgrown frat boy piece of shit! You (indistinct)

HL: Bitch.

QM: (indistinct)

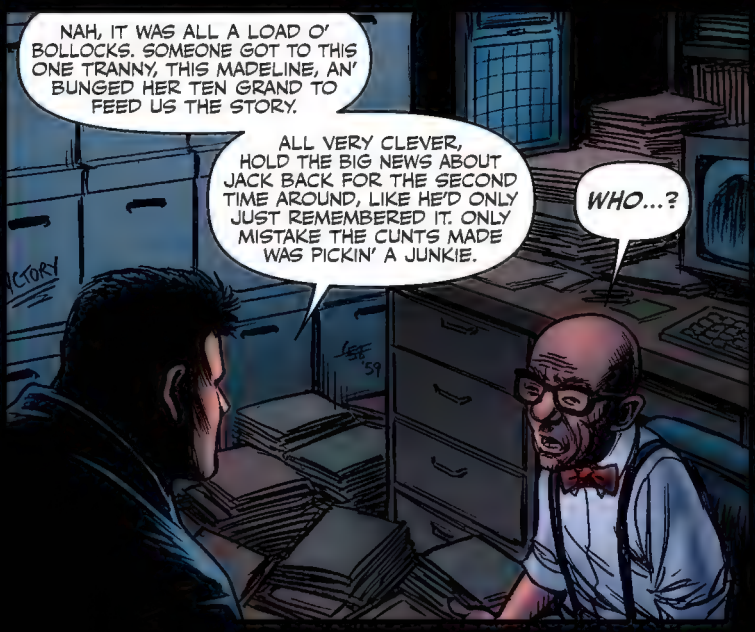
HL: Don't overstep.

QM: I'm sorry. Please, you're hurting me. I'm

HL: You ever lay a hand on me again and I will end you, do you understand? I will

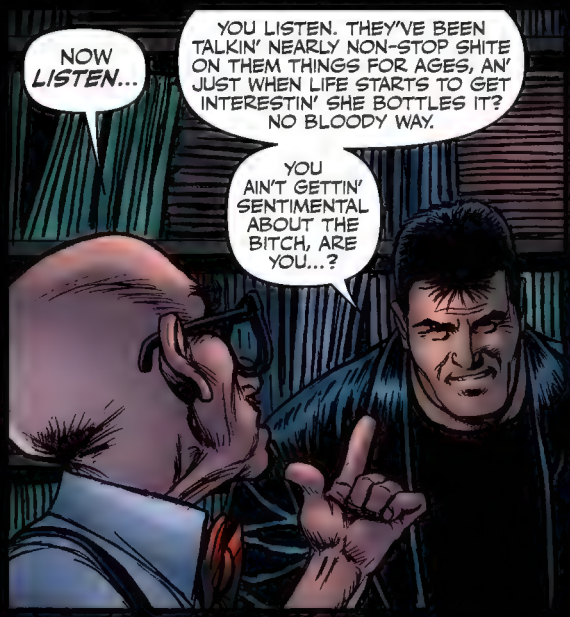
YA POWERS UH FUCKIN' WEAK, FAGGUT...
YA CAN'T WIN, BITCH. YA TAKE ME OUT, I'LL FUCK YA MUTHUH INNA ASS, HOW 'BOUT THAT?
WHAT THE FUCK YA TALKIN' ABOUT? MY MUTHUH'S YOUR MUTHUH, YA SICK FUCKIN' PRICK!

I'M IN CHARACTUH, YA FUCKIN' JAMOOK! JESUS CHRIST!
DON'T MIND THOSE TWO ASSHOLES. IT WASN'T JACK...?


NAH, IT WAS ALL A LOAD O' BOLLOCKS. SOMEONE GOT TO THIS ONE TRANNY, THIS MADELINE, AN' BUNGED HER TEN GRAND TO FEED US THE STORY.
ALL VERY CLEVER, HOLD THE BIG NEWS ABOUT JACK BACK FOR THE SECOND TIME AROUND, LIKE HE'D ONLY JUST REMEMBERED IT. ONLY MISTAKE THE CUNTS MADE WAS PICKIN' A JUNKIE.
WHO...?

YEAH, WHO. WHO BEATS A LADYBOY TO DEATH TO FRAME JACK? WHO KNOWS WE'LL BE SNIFFIN' AROUND, AN' PLANTS THE STORY THEY THINK WE'RE DYIN' TO HEAR?
WHO KNOWS ABOUT DOC PECULIAR'S IN THE FIRST PLACE, COME TO THAT...?

AN' WHO THE HELL WANTS THE BOYS ON A COLLISION COURSE WITH SEVEN, WHICH IS THE OBVIOUS WAY FOR IT TO GO...
THAT'S THE PART DON'T MAKE NO SENSE. NOBODY WINS THAT ONE.
MADELINE SAID THEY JUST KNOCKED ON HIS DOOR ONE DAY. ASIAN BIRD AN' A BLACK LAD, CASUAL CLOBBER, LOCAL ACCENTS.
MEANS NOTHIN'. UNLESS IT'S SORT OF A GO AT THROWIN' US OFF THE SCENT BY BEIN' WEIRD, WHICH IS JUST...I DUNNO...
CLUMSY. LIKE THE REST OF THE GODDAMN THING.
WELL, WE AIN'T FALLIN' FOR IT, WE AIN'T PUTTIN' OUT THE FOOTAGE O' JACK. NOT THAT I'M GONNA PHONE THE BASTARD AN' TELL HIM HE'S IN THE CLEAR.
WHICH BRINGS ME TO MAEVE, BY A BIT OF A ROUNDABOUT ROUTE. WHAT'S THE STORY THERE?
AH, SHE...
SHE GOT SCARED. PULLED THE DAMN BUGS HERSELF.
SAID WHATEVER'S GOIN' ON WITH VOUGHT AN' THE HOMELANDER, THINGS'RE JUST TOO HOT RIGHT NOW...
YEAH? HOW HOT DOES SHE THINK IT'LL GET IF I CALL VOUGHT MESELF AN' TELL 'EM WHAT SHE'S BEEN UP TO?
HEY, DON'T GO TALKIN' CRAZY... YA HURT HER AN' YA DON'T GET NOTHIN' AT ALL...!
APART FROM A NICE WARM FEELIN' INSIDE.

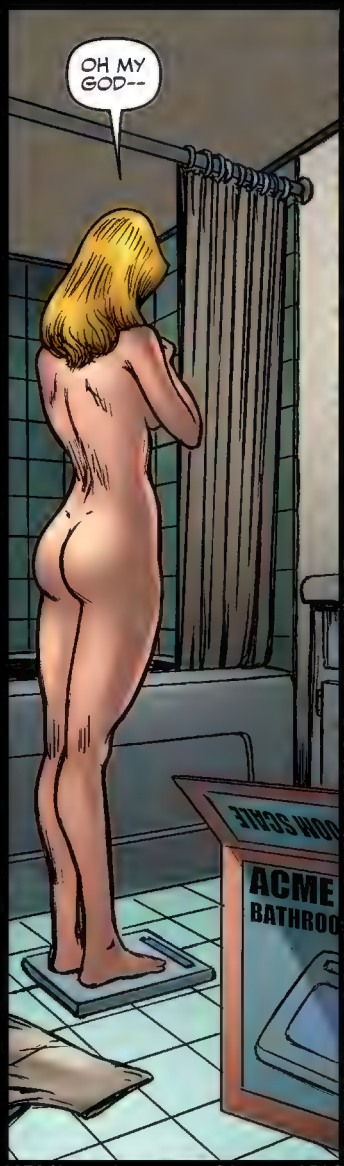

NOW LISTEN...
YOU LISTEN. THEY'VE BEEN TALKIN' NEARLY NON-STOP SHITE ON THEM THINGS FOR AGES, AN' JUST WHEN LIFE STARTS TO GET INTERESTIN' SHE BOTTLES IT? NO BLOODY WAY.
YOU AIN'T GETTIN' SENTIMENTAL ABOUT THE BITCH, ARE YOU...?

'COS I KNOW YOU USED TO GIVE HER ONE FROM TIME TO TIME. I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT WAS JUST FOR A LAUGH--
JESUS FUCKIN' CHRIST, WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TALKIN' TO...?

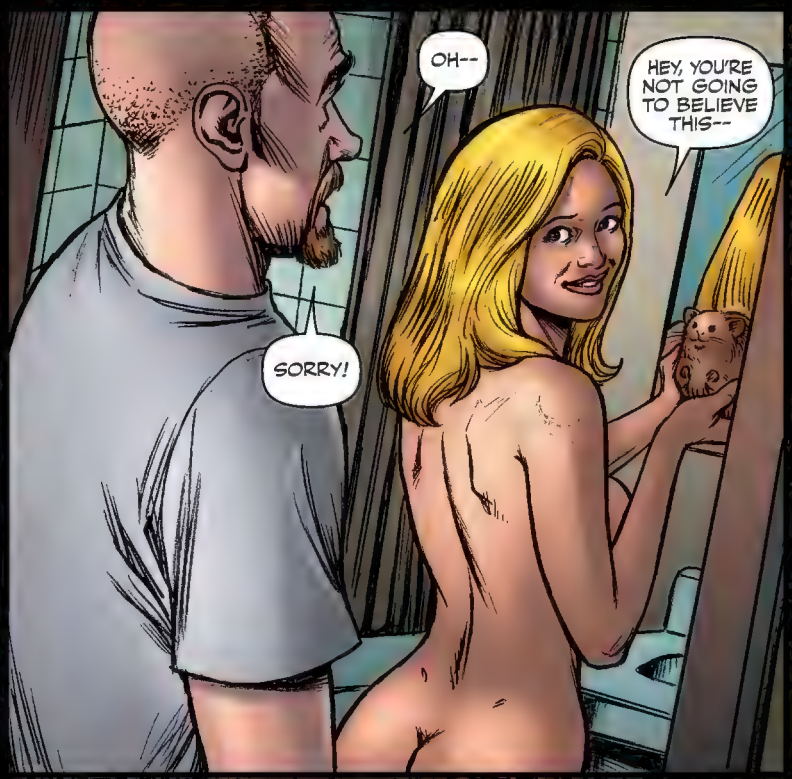
'CAUSE IF YOU--
I THINK I'M TALKIN' TO THE BLOKE USED TO TELL MALLORY NEVER, NEVER TO GET SOFT ON THE BASTARDS. THE BLOKE SAID NINE-ELEVEN WAS A FULL-ON WAR ATROCITY.
AN' SHE WAS PART O' THAT ONE, REMEMBER. SHE WAS THERE ON THE DAY.

RIGHT, END OF.
TELL HER IF SHE DON'T PUT THE BUGS BACK IN, I'M GONNA WANNA MEET HER MESELF. NON-FUCKIN'-NEGOTIABLE.

WE'LL FIND OUR OWN WAY OUT.

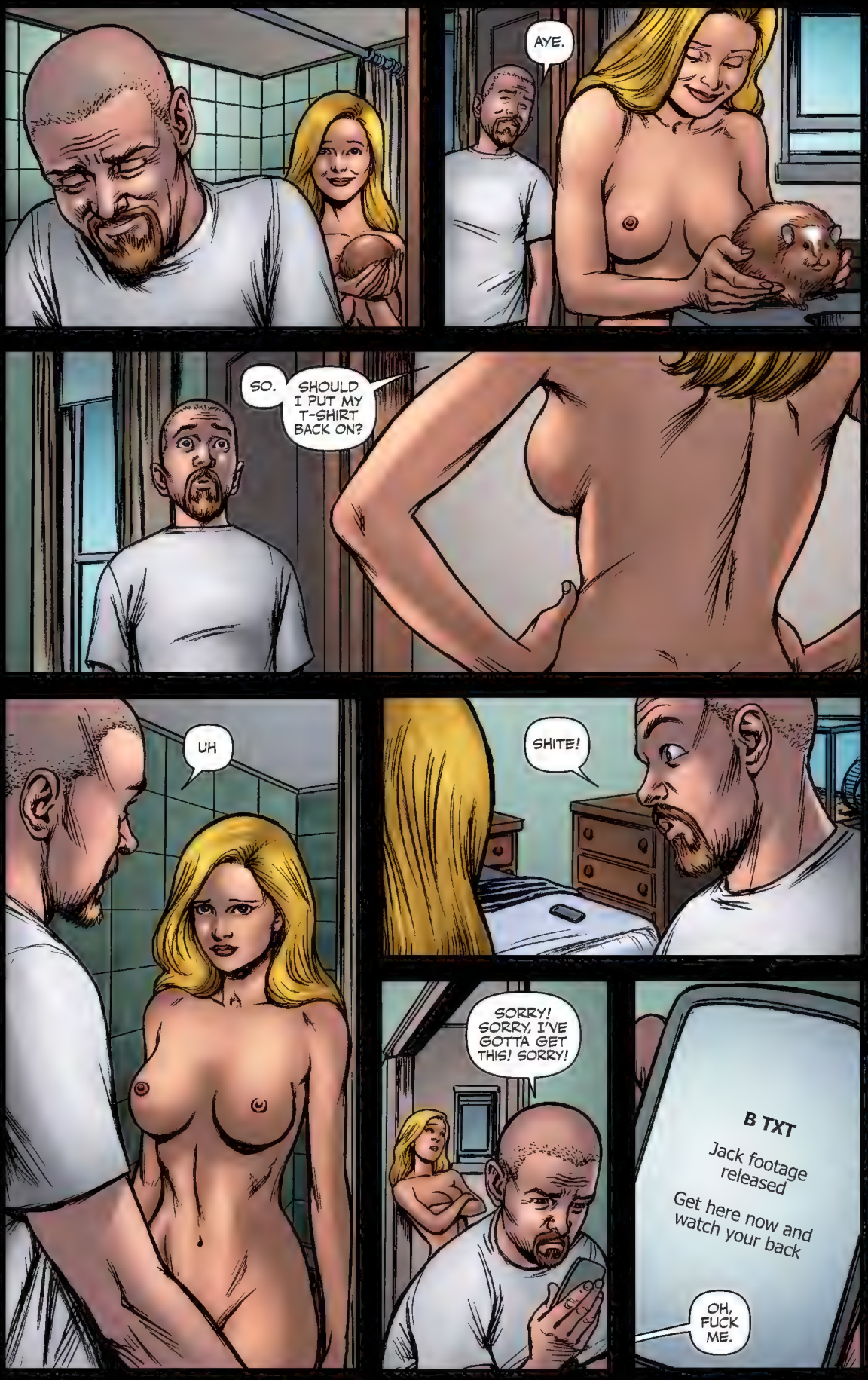

OH MY GOD--
ACME
BATHROO

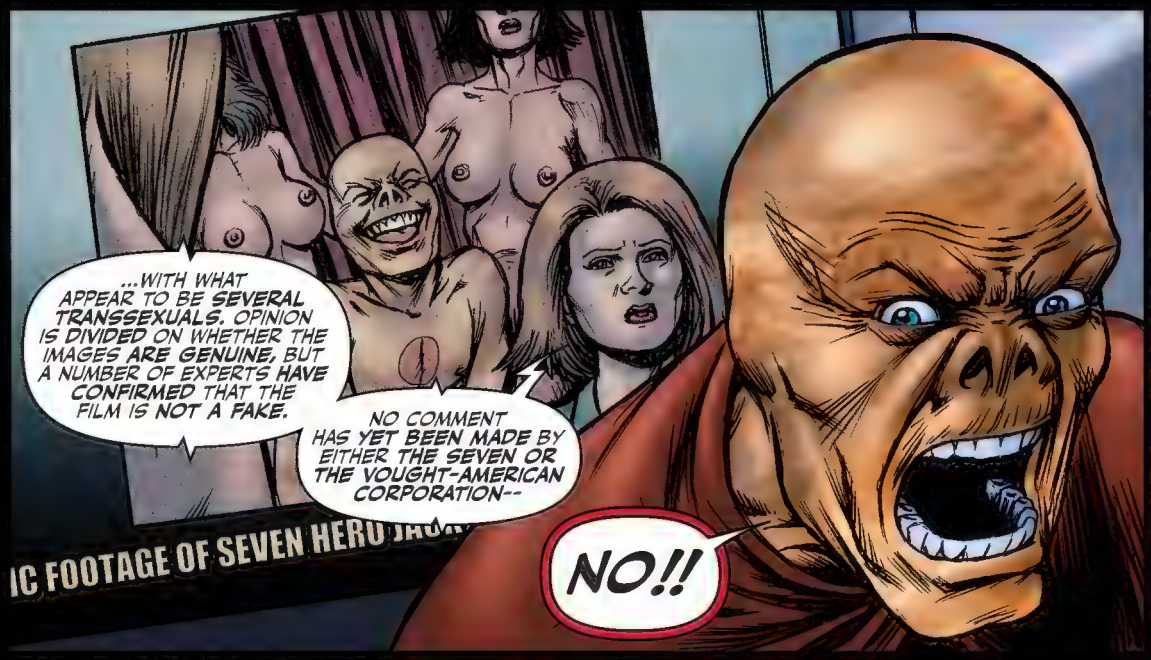
JAMIE, YOU WEIGH A POUND...!


OH--
HEY, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS--
SORRY!

SORRY, I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE--
OH, HUGHIE, STOP IT...
I SHOULD'VE KNOCKED, I'M SORRY.
HUGHIE, DON'T BE A DICK...!

I MEAN WHAT IS IT YOU'RE FREAKED OUT ABOUT, THE NAKED CHICK OR THE FAT HAMSTER?


AYE.
SO.
SHOULD I PUT MY T-SHIRT BACK ON?
UH
SHITE!
SORRY! SORRY, I'VE GOTTA GET THIS! SORRY!
B TXT
Jack footage released
Get here now and watch your back
OH, FUCK ME.


...WITH WHAT APPEAR TO BE SEVERAL TRANSSEXUALS. OPINION IS DIVIDED ON WHETHER THE IMAGES ARE GENUINE, BUT A NUMBER OF EXPERTS HAVE CONFIRMED THAT THE FILM IS NOT A FAKE.
NO COMMENT HAS YET BEEN MADE BY EITHER THE SEVEN OR THE VOUGHT-AMERICAN CORPORATION--
IC FOOTAGE OF SEVEN HERO
NO!!

BUT THE AFFAIR CASTS SERIOUS DOUBT ON THE HERO'S POSITION WITH THE WORLD'S PREMIER SUPERTEAM, WHO HAVE LONG SERVED AS AN EXAMPLE TO--
NO, NO, NO-NO-NO-NO-NO! THEY'RE NOT GONNA FUCKING DO ME LIKE THIS! BUTCHER AND HIS SICK FUCKING CREW OF FREAKS, THEY'RE FUCKING-FUCKING-FUCKING-FUCKING NOT!

THAT'S A LOT OF FUCKING.
FUCK YOU!
I DIDN'T KILL THE FUCKING TRANNY! I DIDN'T! THEY THINK I DID BUT I FUCKING DIDN'T, AND THEY'VE PUT THIS SHIT OUT TO FUCK ME!
I'M AN INNOCENT FUCKING MAN! I AM!

REGARDLESS.
WHAT YOU REALLY ARE IS DONE.

WHAT...?
YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY SURVIVE SOMETHING LIKE THIS. SUPERHEROES DON'T DO THOSE THINGS, IT'S DOES-NOT-COMPUTE TERRITORY FOR THE LITTLE PEOPLE.
YOU'RE OFF-MESSAGE, IS WHAT YOU ARE. VOUGHT'LL BE GETTING READY TO PHOTOSHOP YOU OUT OF THE PICTURE.
I'M A LITTLE SURPRISED WE HAVEN'T HEARD FROM THEM ALREADY...

YOU MEAN YOU'RE JUST GOING TO... TO...
OH JESUS CHRIST ALMIGHTY, WHO THE HELL AM I KIDDING?

WELL I MAY BE FUCKED, BUT I'M NOT GETTING FUCKED ALONE! I'LL TAKE THOSE COCKSUCKERS DOWN WITH ME!
NO YOU WON'T.
I'LL FUCKING-- I'LL TAKE THEM OUT, THAT'S WHAT I'LL FUCKING DO!
WRONG AGAIN.

YOU MIGHT WANT TO REMEMBER THE LAMPLIGHTER...
FUCK OFF, WONDER-TITS! SO WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN TO ME NOW, AM I GONNA BE FUCKING EXILED? ME AND THE NIGGER FROM TEENAGE KIX, AND MICHAEL FUCKING RICHARDS?

WATCH YOUR MOUTH...
OH, BETTER BY THE MINUTE! NOW I'M TAKING SHIT FROM THE LEAST BLACK BLACK MAN ON THE PLANET!

AND WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN...?
IT MEANS TRY IT IN EBONICS. IT MEANS GIVE IT A LITTLE MORE GHETTO, JUNGLE BUNNY.

NO.
CARPO--!
WANNA TRY IT NOW, FAGGOT? YEAH? WANNA GIVE IT ANOTHER FUCKING TRY NOW?
D'YOU WANT ME TO?
CUT THE SHIT, BOTH OF YOU. THE LAST THING WE NEED RIGHT NOW IS A BAD SITUATION GETTING WORSE.
PAH...
OH NO, WE WOULDN'T WANT ANYTHING FUCKING UP YOUR LITTLE PET PROJECT, WOULD WE?
A CHILD OF FOUR WOULD KNOW TO KEEP HIS MOUTH SHUT AT THIS POINT...
OKAY-- OKAY, MAN, I GET IT...!
LOOK, THE LAST THING I WANNA DO IS PISS YOU OFF. BUT I DIDN'T DO THIS, OKAY? I SWEAR IT.

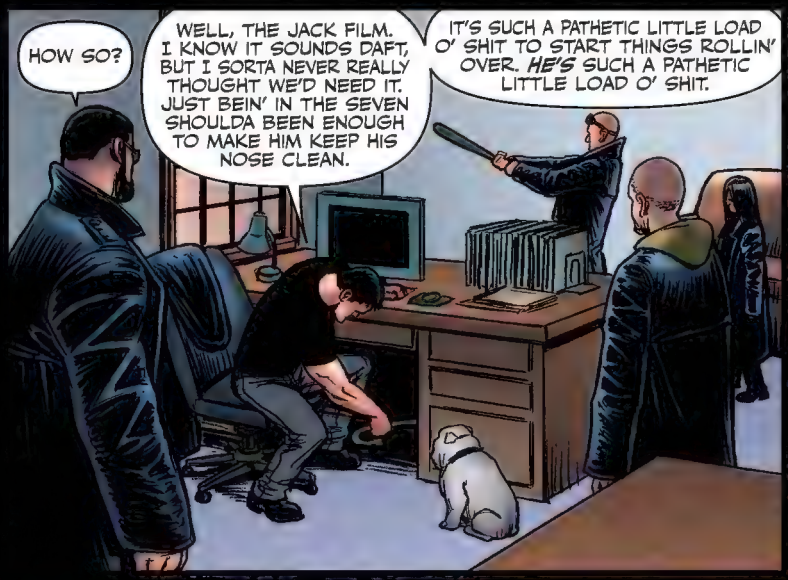
NOW YOU CAN LISTEN TO MY HEARTBEAT IF YOU WANT, BUT I THINK YOU KNOW I'M TELLING THE TRUTH. THEY DON'T KNOW SHIT, BUT THEY'VE FUCKED ME FOR IT ANYWAY--AND YOU MIGHT BE READY TO KICK ME OUT OF THE NEVERENDING PARTY, BUT HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING HERE...?

THEY'RE DOING THIS TO ME, THEY'RE DOING IT TO YOU. TO THE SEVEN. THEY'VE JUST DECIDED, OKAY, HE'S GUILTY, LET'S FUCK HIM, AND ONE UPLOAD LATER THEY'VE TAKEN DOWN ONE OF THE TOP FUCKING SUPES ALIVE.
IS THAT REALLY HOW EASY IT IS? TO DO ONE OF US?

ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO LET THAT STAND, HOMELANDER?

I MEAN... HOW MUCH SHIT ARE YOU READY TO EAT FOR THESE FUCKS...?

FUNNY THE WAY THINGS GO, SOMETIMES...


HOW SO?
WELL, THE JACK FILM. I KNOW IT SOUNDS DAFT, BUT I SORTA NEVER REALLY THOUGHT WE'D NEED IT. JUST BEIN' IN THE SEVEN SHOULDA BEEN ENOUGH TO MAKE HIM KEEP HIS NOSE CLEAN.
IT'S SUCH A PATHETIC LITTLE LOAD O' SHIT TO START THINGS ROLLIN' OVER. HE'S SUCH A PATHETIC LITTLE LOAD O' SHIT.

START THINGS ROLLIN'...?
WELL, THEY'RE GONNA THINK WE'RE THE ONES POSTED IT, AIN'T THEY? THAT'S BOUND TO SHAKE SOMETHIN' LOOSE.
WAY I SEE IT, IT WAS AS LIKELY TO BE THIS AS ANYTHING ELSE.

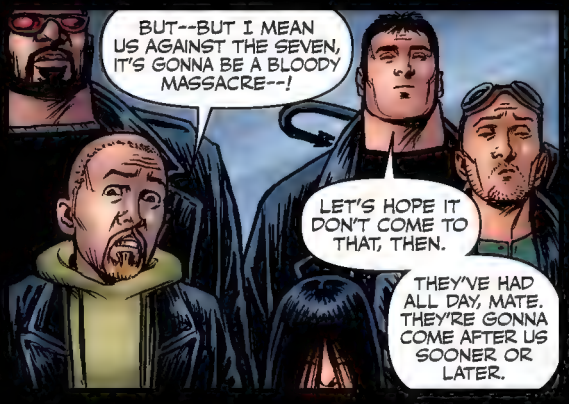
YEAH? NOT SOMETHIN' BIGGER?
THAT AIN'T THE WAY LIFE IS.
SOMETIMES IT IS.

SOMETIMES LIFE'S AS BIG AN' MAD AN' FUCKIN' WIDESCREEN AS IT DESERVES TO BE.
THAT'S WHAT I ALWAYS THOUGHT'D KICK THINGS OFF, I SUPPOSE. SOMETHIN' REALLY MENTAL.

WE'RE GOIN' UP TO THE ROOF NOW, MATE. YOU'RE STAYIN' HERE.
NO ARGUMENTS, SON. YOU'RE STAYIN'.
WARF! WARF!

WAARRRF!
AU REVOIR, NOBLE CHIEN DE TERREUR! REMEMBER ME WITH KINDNESS, YES?

UH...I'M NO' BEIN' FUNNY OR ANYTHIN', BUT ARE WE ALL GOIN' UP TO GET KILLED HERE?
HOPE NOT. BUT IF IT DOES COME TO A BARNEY I WANNA BIT O' ROOM TO MANEUVER.


BUT--BUT I MEAN US AGAINST THE SEVEN, IT'S GONNA BE A BLOODY MASSACRE--!
LET'S HOPE IT DON'T COME TO THAT, THEN.
THEY'VE HAD ALL DAY, MATE. THEY'RE GONNA COME AFTER US SOONER OR LATER.

AN' THEY'RE GONNA BE WANTIN' ANSWERS.
21

AYE, BUT I MEAN WHAT THE FUCK'S REALLY GOIN' ON HERE? WHO POSTED THAT BLOODY FOOTAGE ONLINE, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE?
STAIRWAY A ROOF
DUNNO. BUT I'VE A FUNNY FEELIN' ALL THEIR DREAMS ARE ABOUT TO COME TRUE.
I'M SORRY, I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE EVERYONE'S SO CALM...!
WHAT YOU WANNA DO? TRY HIDIN' FROM 'EM?
EVEN IF ONE COULD, I FOR ONE AM NOT INCLINED. IT IS A THING THAT MUST BE FACED EVENTUALLY, PETIT HUGHIE.
OH, FUCK ME.
ANYONE LIVES ANYWHERE ELSE IS A CUNT.
SO IS NOW GOOD?

OR SHOULD WE COME BACK ANOTHER TIME?
next: THE FIRST CASUALTY

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THE BIG RIDE

conclusion

WHAT...?
THEY DIDN'T DO IT. POSTING THE FOOTAGE, IT WASN'T THEM.

NO, NO, THAT'S BULLSHIT! IT HAS TO HAVE BEEN THEM, I MEAN WHO ELSE COULD IT BE?
NO IDEA. BUT I KNOW HE'S NOT LYING.
NO, HE'S--FUCKING CONTROLLING HIS BREATHING OR SOMETHING, HE'S LEARNED HOW TO SLOW DOWN HIS HEARTBEAT! HE'S LYING!

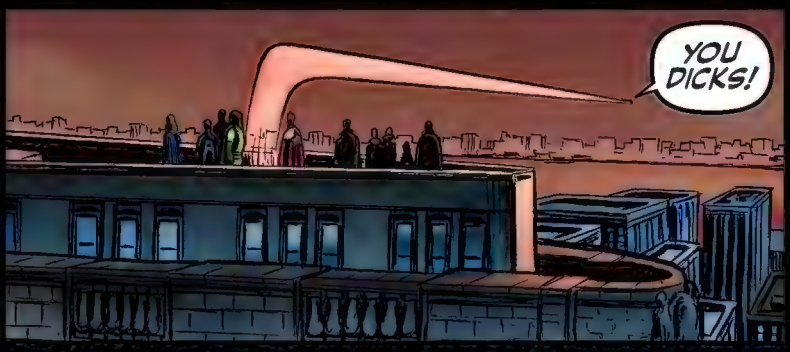
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS...
RIDICULOUS? THIS IS MY FUCKING LIFE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT!
THESE COCKSUCKERS RUINED ME! THEY FUCKING DID ME FOR GOOD! AND YOU LOOK AT THIS PRICK FOR FIVE SECONDS AND GIVE HIM A PASS JUST BECAUSE HE SAYS OTHERWISE--?

WELL FUCK THAT, I'M NOT GOING OUT LIKE SOME ASSHOLE! I WANT PAYBACK FOR THIS SHIT! I'M GONNA FUCKING KILL THESE FREAKS, AND NOBODY'S GOING TO--
NO.

YOU'RE LEAVING.
THE STAKES ARE TOO HIGH FOR SELF-INDULGENCE.

FUCK! FUCK! FUCK-FUCK-FUCK!

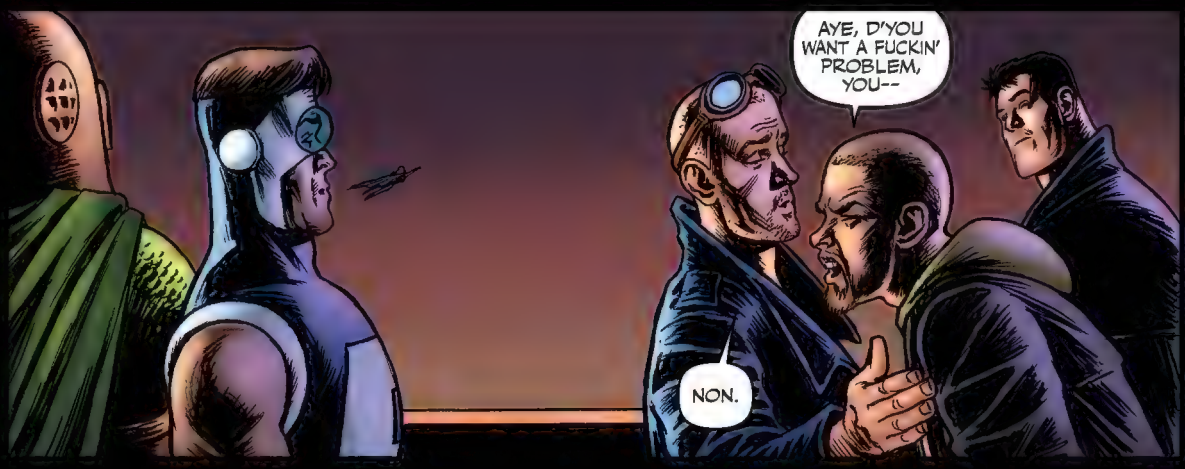
YOU ASSHOLES! YOU FUCKING PIECES OF DOGSHIT!
JUST GO, IDIOT...
I'M GONNA GET YOU FOR THIS, I DON'T GIVE A FLYING FUCK!

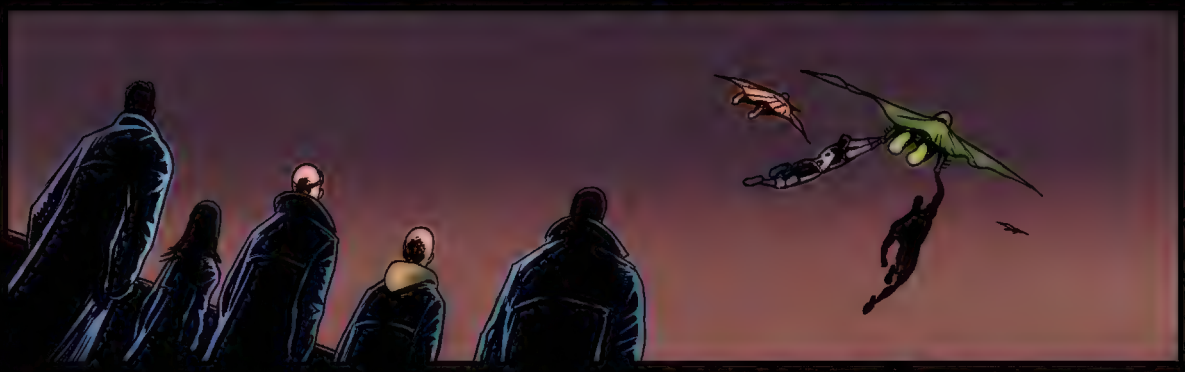

YOU DICKS!

AND WE'RE GOING TO LEAVE AS WELL. BECAUSE...
THIS AIN'T THE TIME.

NO, YOU'RE RIGHT.
IT ISN'T.
WAIT...

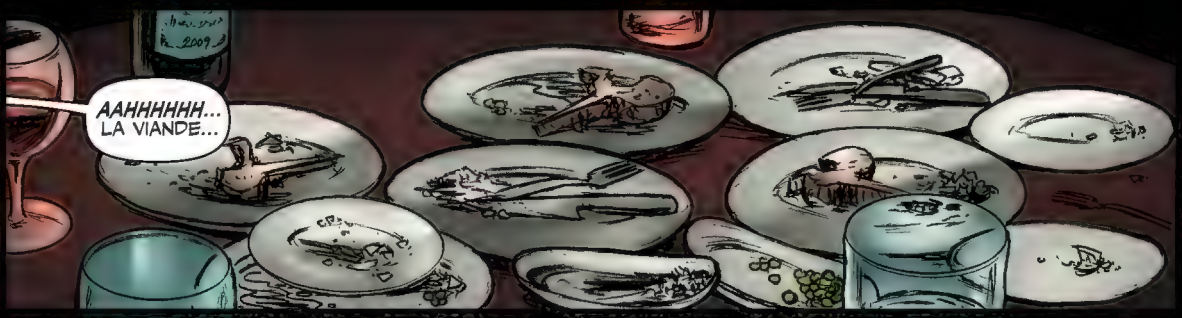
SOMEONE HAS ATTEMPTED TO PROVOKE A WAR BETWEEN US. A POTENTIALLY CATACLYSMIC CONFRONTATION.
SHOULD WE NOT INVESTIGATE?
SHOULD WE NOT TEAM UP, AND--
DON'T BE A CUNT ALL YER LIFE.
YOU LOT BE ON YER WAY. I'M SURE WE'LL BE SEEIN' EACH OTHER AGAIN SOONER OR LATER.
LET'S JUST GET BACK TO NORMAL FOR NOW.
GET EVERYTHING BACK TO NORMAL.
YEAH?
?
WHAT THE FUCK IS YOUR PROBLEM?


AYE, D'YOU WANT A FUCKIN' PROBLEM, YOU--
NON.



WELL, THAT WAS A RIGHT LAUGH.
I TELL YOU WHAT, I'M FEELIN'A BIT PECKISH. DOES ANYONE FANCY A SPOT O' NOSEBAG?

CHINKY? OH, SORRY, HEN, I DIDN'T MEAN TO SAY--
I WAS THINKIN' STEAKS. DO MONKEY'S EXPENSES A BIT O' DAMAGE.


AAHHHHHH... LA VIANDE...

WHAT NOBLE CREATURES ARE OUR FOUR-LEGGED FRIENDS...
AYE. I WAS A VEGETARIAN ONCE, BUT I GREW OUT OF IT.
THAT'S FUNNY, JACK'S BACK AT DOC PECULIAR'S...
YEAH?

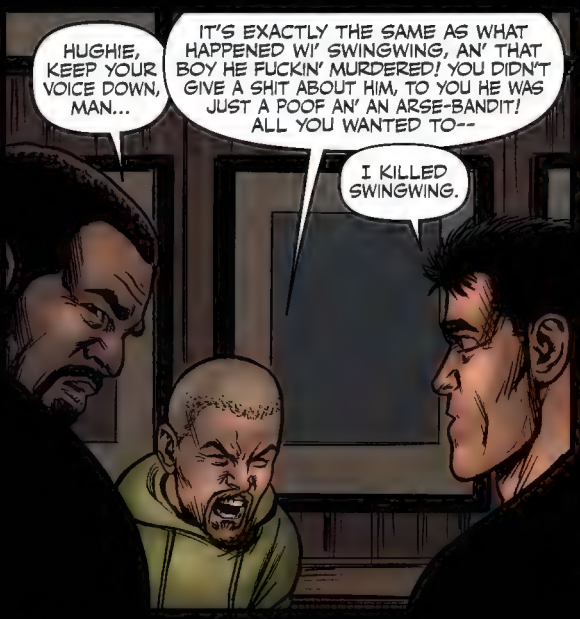
YEAH, DOC SAYS HE SHOWED UP TWENTY MINUTES AGO. STINKIN' MOOD. THEY KNOW HE DIDN'T DO THE TRANNY, BUT NONE O' THE OTHERS WANNA GO IN AN' BUM HIM.
HE'S DOIN' A BLEEDIN' TON O' BLOW.

SO ARE WE GONNA TRY AN' FIND OUT WHO SET US UP HERE?
'COURSE WE ARE.
'CAUSE I MEAN WE ALL COULDA GOT KILLED THERE, LIKE. AN' THAT WAS DEFINITELY THE OBJECT O' THE EXERCISE, IT'S...IT'S DASTARDLY...
IT'S DOWNRIGHT FUCKIN' MUTTLEY, MATE.

ARE YOU GONNA UPSTAGE EVERY FUCKIN' THING I EVER SAY...?
EH?
DASTARDLY'S MY WORD. I BROUGHT IT BACK WI' ME FROM SCOTLAND, I USED TO SAY IT WHEN I WAS A LADDIE.
IT'S MINE.
UH...ALL RIGHT...
I DON'T WANNA SOUND DAFT, OR ANYTHIN', BUT--
TOO LATE.
NO, I'M SERIOUS HERE, ALL RIGHT? I MEAN IT.
YOU UNDERMINE EVERYTHING I DO, YOU DO IT ALL THE TIME. IT'S LIKE THE OTHER DAY WHEN I GOT BACK, YOU SAW ME COMIN' AN' YOU AMBUSHED ME--YOU DIDN'T WANT ME SAYIN' WHAT I WANTED TO, SO YOU THREW ME OFF-BALANCE--
AMBUSHED YOU? WHAT THE FUCK'RE YOU ON ABOUT?
YOU DID. YOU DIDN'T WANT ME SAYIN' IT, SO YOU STOPPED ME THE WAY YOU ALWAYS DO. UNTIL YOU WERE READY, AN' I'D BE ALL CONFUSED AN' YOU'D HAVE THE ADVANTAGE...
PETIT HUGHIE, YOU HAVE ADOPTED THE MANNER OF LE TALKING HEADS: YOU HAVE STOPPED MAKING SENSE.
ALL OF YOU STOP FUCKIN' LAUGHIN' AT ME!

I'M NO' FUCKIN' KIDDIN' ABOUT THIS! I'M FED UP FEELIN' LIKE A FUCKIN' PRICK JUST 'CAUSE YOU LOT FANCY A LAUGH!
I'VE BEEN HERE LONG ENOUGH, I DO MY FAIR SHARE! AN' IT'S ABOUT TIME I GOT SOME FUCKIN' RESPECT--!

NO-ONE'S--
AN' ANOTHER THING, ALL THAT STUFF ABOUT TRANNIES AN' LADYBOYS AN' CALLIN' THEM HIM AN' MATE--THAT'S NO' WHAT THEY'RE CALLED! YOU KNOW I HATE THAT SHITE!
THEY'RE HUMAN BEIN'S, AN' WHEN THEY GET KILLED IT'S AS BAD AS IT HAPPENIN' TO ANYONE! IT'S NO' A JOKE! AN' IT'S NO' JUST A FUCKIN' STICK TO BEAT THE SUPES ROUND THE HEAD WITH, EITHER, LIKE IF IT HADN'T BEEN JACK WE WOULDN'T'VE GIVEN A FUCK!


HUGHIE, KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN, MAN...
IT'S EXACTLY THE SAME AS WHAT HAPPENED WI' SWINGWING, AN' THAT BOY HE FUCKIN' MURDERED! YOU DIDN'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT HIM, TO YOU HE WAS JUST A POOF AN' AN ARSE-BANDIT! ALL YOU WANTED TO--
I KILLED SWINGWING.

WHAT?
I UNSCREWED A PART ON HIS WANKY FUCKIN' JETPACK, SO IT'D RUN OUTTA FUEL. I DID IT RIGHT IN FRONT O' YOU.
I DID THINK ABOUT USIN' HIM AS A SOURCE, BUT THEN I THOUGHT... FUCK IT, LET'S JUST DO HIM.

NOW MAYBE I CALLED THAT LAD A FEW NAMES, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND I GOT THE CUNT THAT CHUCKED HIM OFF A ROOF.
WHAT'D YOU DO?

I--
FUCK--!
YOU'RE JUST DOIN' IT AGAIN...!

YOU'RE SAYIN' WHATEVER YOU HAVE TO, JUST TO KEEP MY BLOODY HEAD SPINNIN'! YOU ALWAYS KEN JUST HOW TO DO IT!
BUT I KEN THINGS TOO, ALL RIGHT? A FUCKSIGHT MORE'N YOU THINK! AN'--
YEAH?

WHAT IS IT YOU KNOW, THEN?

I THINK I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ON ABOUT, WITH THIS UNDERMININ' CARRY-ON. YOU AIN'T SAYIN' IT ALL THAT WELL, BUT I THINK I'VE GOT THE IDEA.
ENOUGH SAID. ALL RIGHT?

SO.
HUGHIE'S RIGHT, WE DO WANNA BE LOOKIN' INTO WHAT'S HAPPENED. NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT, YEAH?

RIGHT THEN.

'SCUSE ME, BOYS.

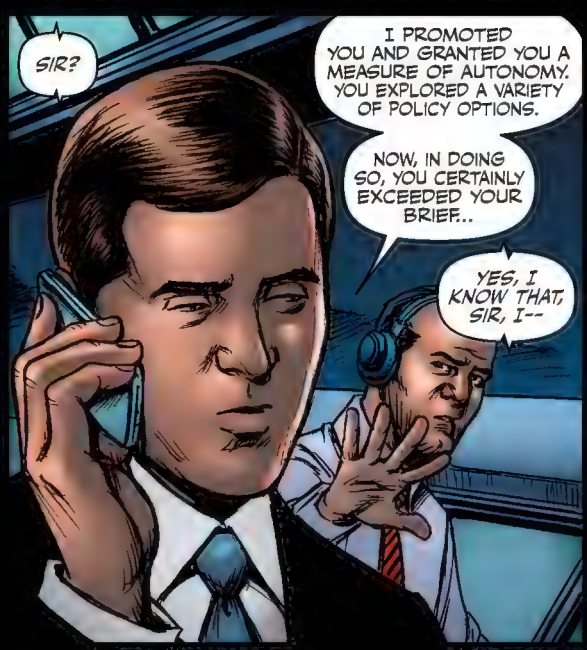
I'VE GOTTA SEE A MAN ABOUT A DOG.

YOU MEAN-- WAIT A MINUTE, YOU CAN'T GO AFTER HIM NOW, THE SEVEN'RE--
SHUT THE *FUCK UP*, HUGHIE.

BUT...
YOU GONE OUTTA YOUR GODDAMNED MIND?

DANGER
ELECTRIC FENCE
KEEP OFF-KEEP AWAY
5000 VOLTS
PRIVATE PROPERTY
ABSOLUTELY NO ADMITTANCE
WHY ON EARTH WOULD YOU FEEL THE NEED TO TENDER YOUR RESIGNATION?

0:00:00
I...SIR, I OVERSTEPPED. I VERY NEARLY PRECIPITATED A DISASTER.
I FAILED.
AND?
0:00:00
SIM 001

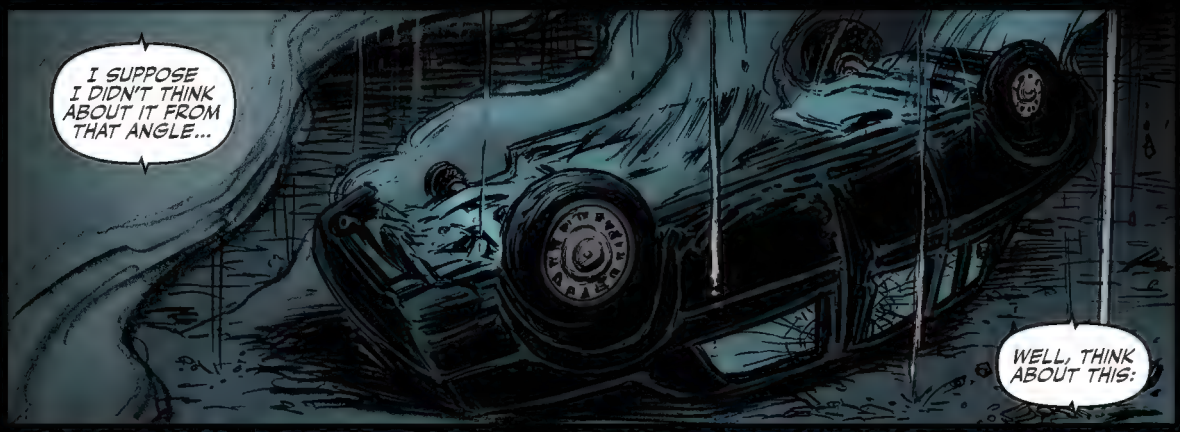

SIR?
I PROMOTED YOU AND GRANTED YOU A MEASURE OF AUTONOMY. YOU EXPLORED A VARIETY OF POLICY OPTIONS.
NOW, IN DOING SO, YOU CERTAINLY EXCEEDED YOUR BRIEF...
YES, I KNOW THAT, SIR, I--

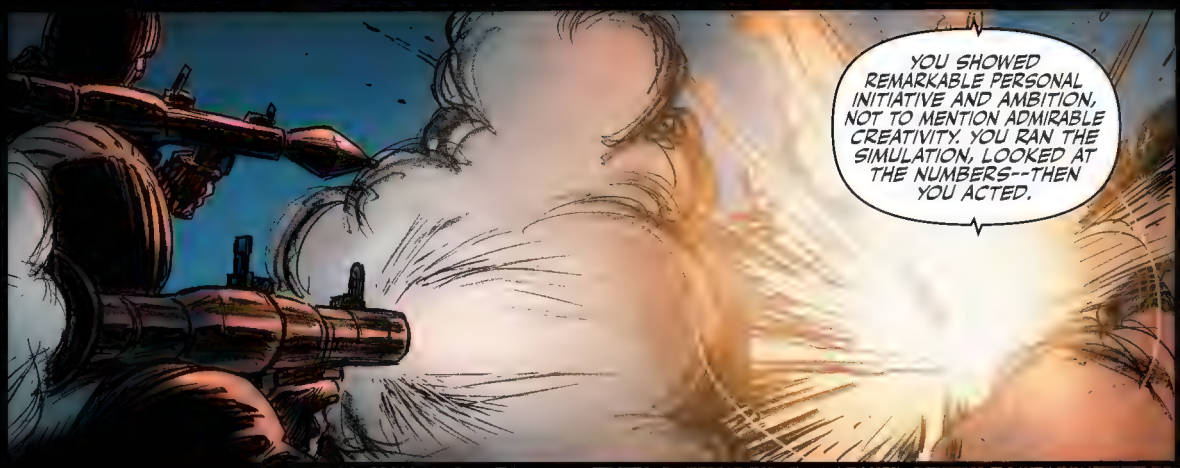
I HAD THE FEELING YOU WERE ENCOURAGING ME IN THE DIRECTION I ULTIMATELY TOOK.
I MISINTERPRETED.

YES, THAT'S TRUE. BUT WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY, MS. BRADLEY, WAS THAT--
GIVE ME ONE MOMENT, WOULD YOU?

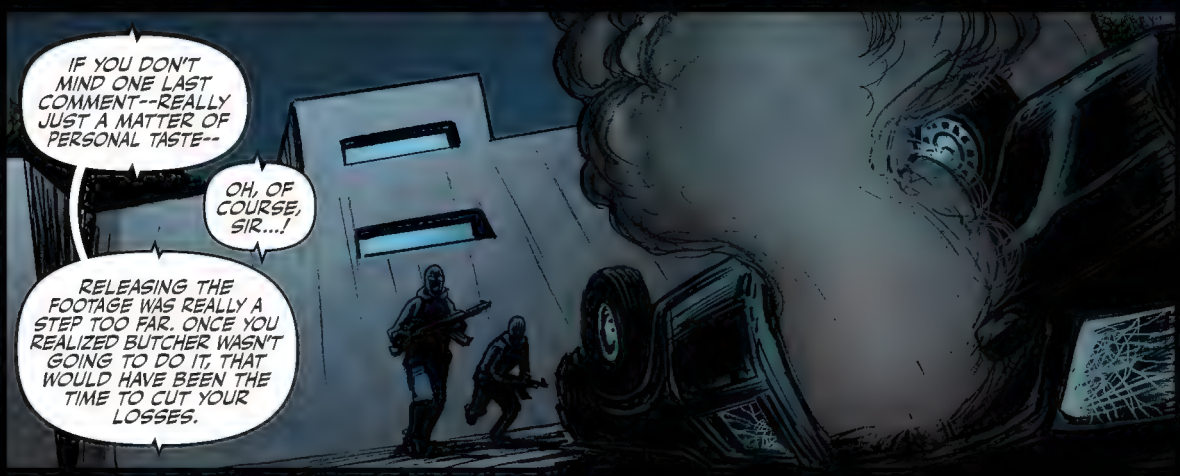
I WAS GOING TO SAY THAT WHILE YOU DID EXCEED YOUR BRIEF, AND WHILE IT'S STILL TOO EARLY TO DECLARE THE SEVEN SURPLUS TO REQUIREMENTS, THERE WAS--ULTIMATELY--LITTLE HARM DONE.
JACK FROM JUPITER IS NOT THE HOMELANDER. HE ISN'T EVEN THE DEEP.

WHAT HE IS, REALLY, IS EMINENTLY REPLACEABLE. WE'LL SEND HIM OFF TO BE A HERMIT AND BRING IN SOMEBODY NEW, MAYBE A MAVERIK OR ANOTHER ONE OF THE YOUNG AMERICANS.
THE PUBLIC LIKE THESE LINE-UP CHANGES. GIVES THEM A PLEASANT SENSE OF INVOLVEMENT.

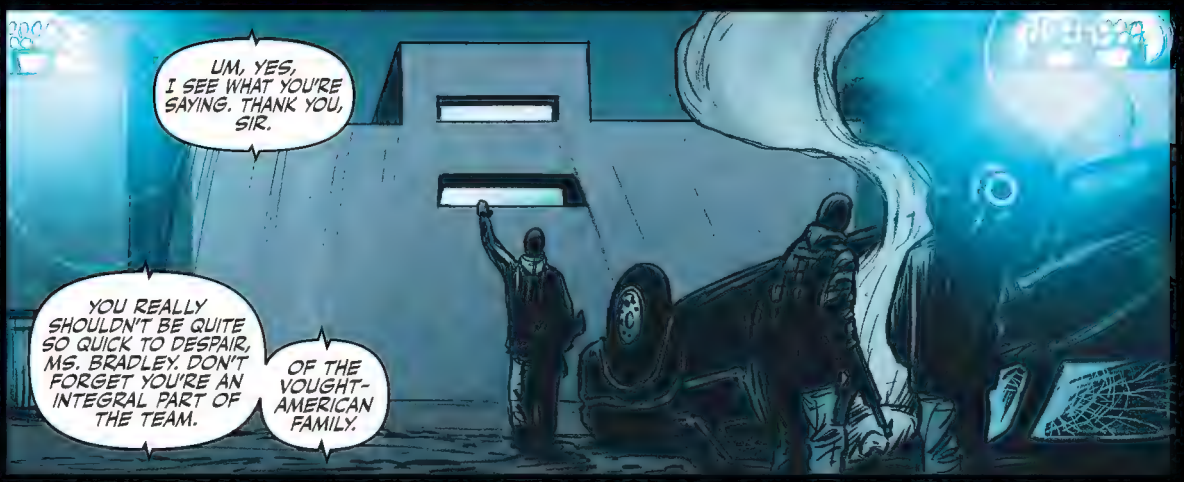

I SUPPOSE I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT IT FROM THAT ANGLE...
WELL, THINK ABOUT THIS:


YOU SHOWED REMARKABLE PERSONAL INITIATIVE AND AMBITION, NOT TO MENTION ADMIRABLE CREATIVITY. YOU RAN THE SIMULATION, LOOKED AT THE NUMBERS--THEN YOU ACTED.

IT WAS A GOOD PLAN, WELL EXECUTED.
JUST POORLY TIMED.


IF YOU DON'T MIND ONE LAST COMMENT--REALLY JUST A MATTER OF PERSONAL TASTE--
OH, OF COURSE, SIR...!
RELEASING THE FOOTAGE WAS REALLY A STEP TOO FAR. ONCE YOU REALIZED BUTCHER WASN'T GOING TO DO IT, THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN THE TIME TO CUT YOUR LOSSES.

AGAIN, JUST PERSONAL TASTE.


UM, YES, I SEE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING. THANK YOU, SIR.
YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T BE QUITE SO QUICK TO DESPAIR, MS. BRADLEY. DON'T FORGET YOU'RE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE TEAM.
OF THE VOUGHT-AMERICAN FAMILY.

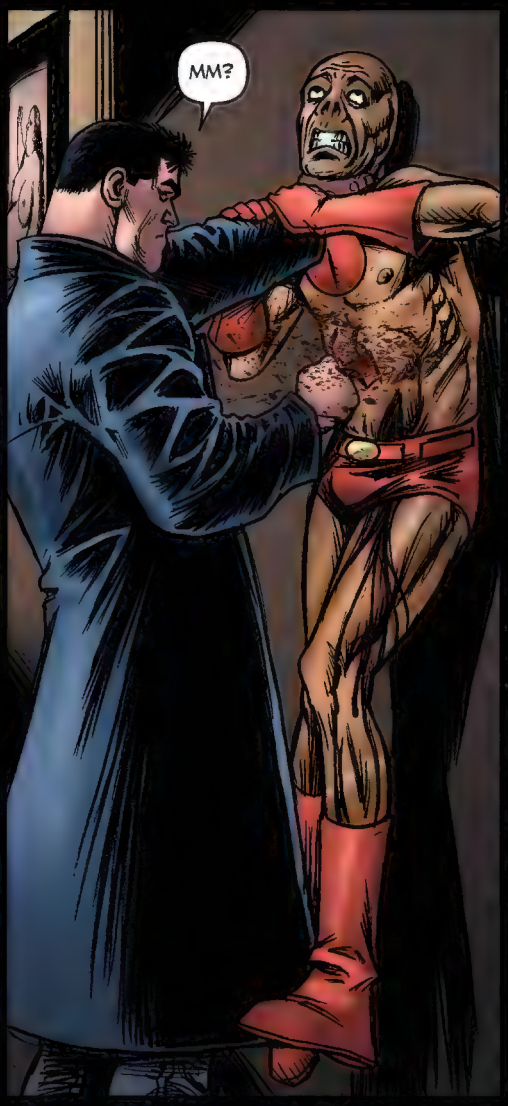
0:00:42
YOU REALLY ARE QUITE VITAL.
GOODBYE.

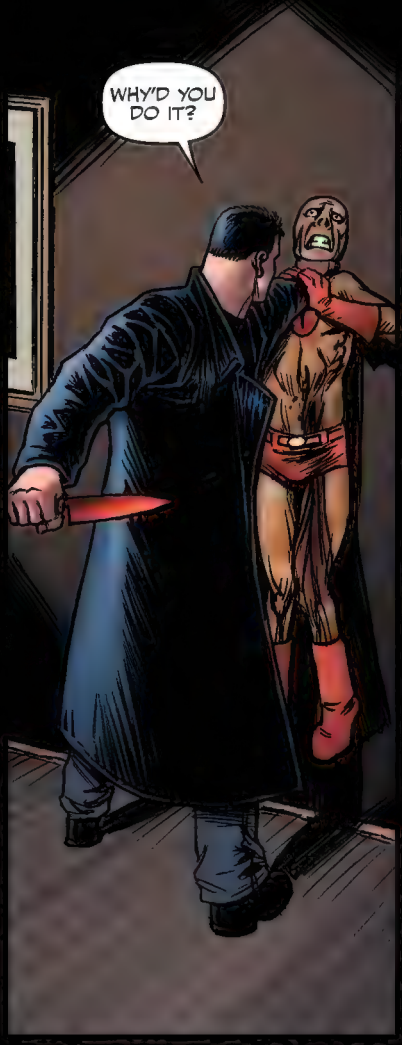
ABOUT TIME, SLUTS--
HNK
CUH--
CURRH--!

HNNHH!
NNNNN!
NNNNN!

HAAHHHHH--!

WHY'D YOU KILL ME DOG, JACK?


MM?

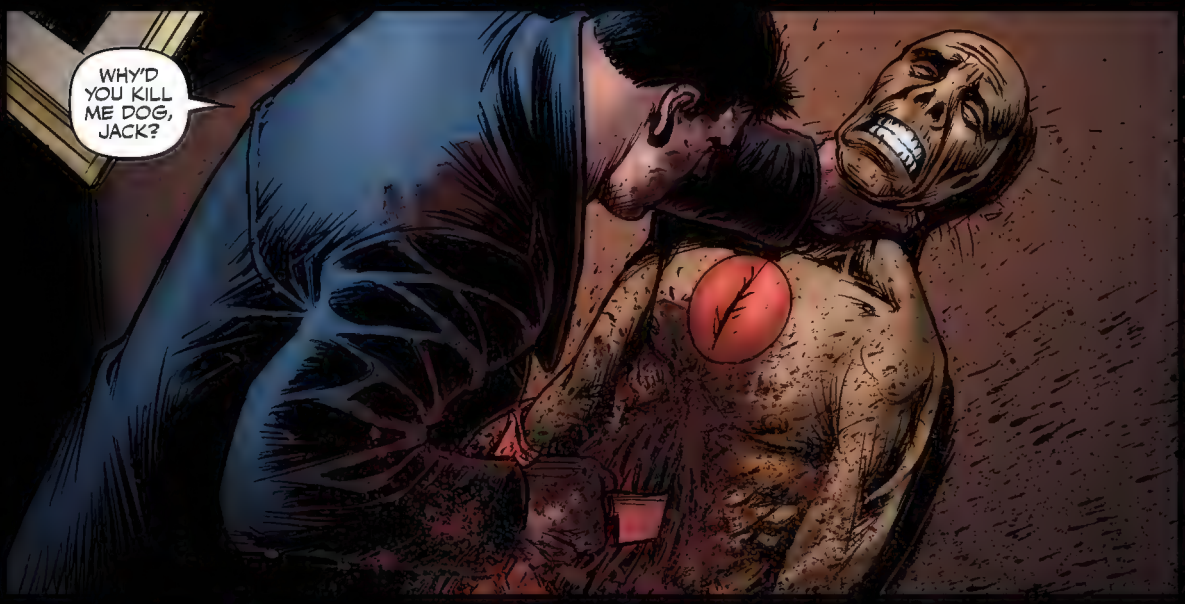

WHY'D YOU DO IT?

WHY'D YOU KILL ME DOG?

POOR WEE FELLA...
THE FIRST BAD DAY.
White Label
JUST THE FIRST.

WHY'D YOU KILL ME DOG, JACK?
WHY'D YOU KILL ME DOG, JACK?
WHY'D YOU KILL ME DOG, JACK?
WHY'D YOU KILL ME DOG?

P
P
PL--
IT AIN'T ME, SON.
I'M SOMEWHERE ELSE WATCHIN' IT HAPPEN.
IT AIN'T ME.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WHY'D YOU KILL ME DOG, JACK?

6
WHY'D YOU KILL ME DOG, JACK?

WHY'D YOU KILL ME DOG?
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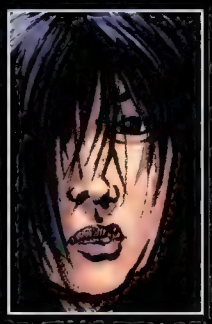

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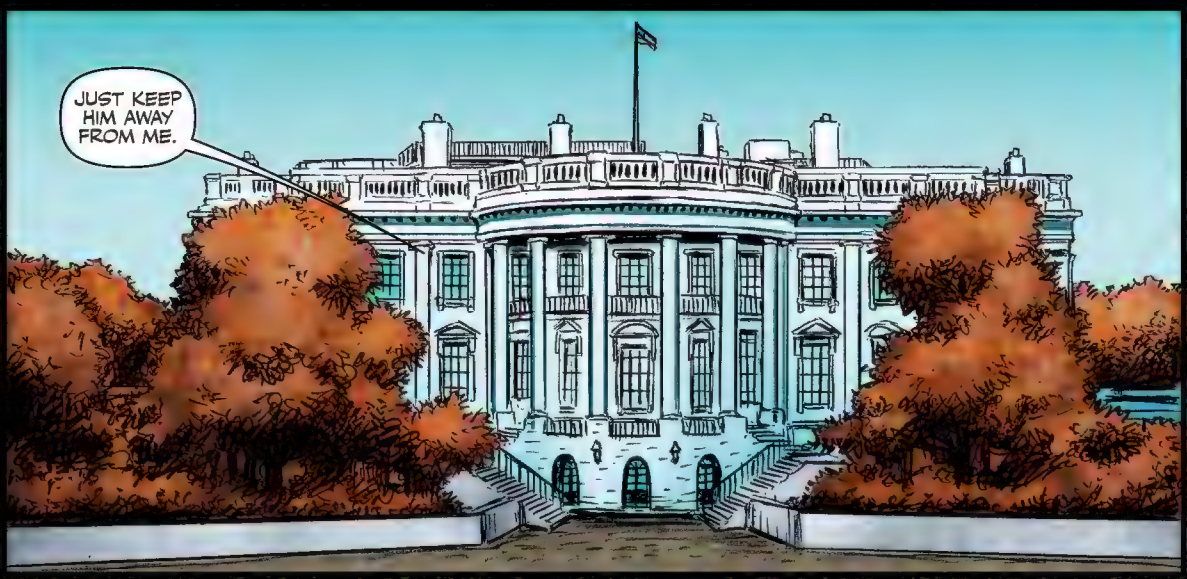
OVER THE HILL WITH THE SWORDS OF A THOUSAND MEN

part one

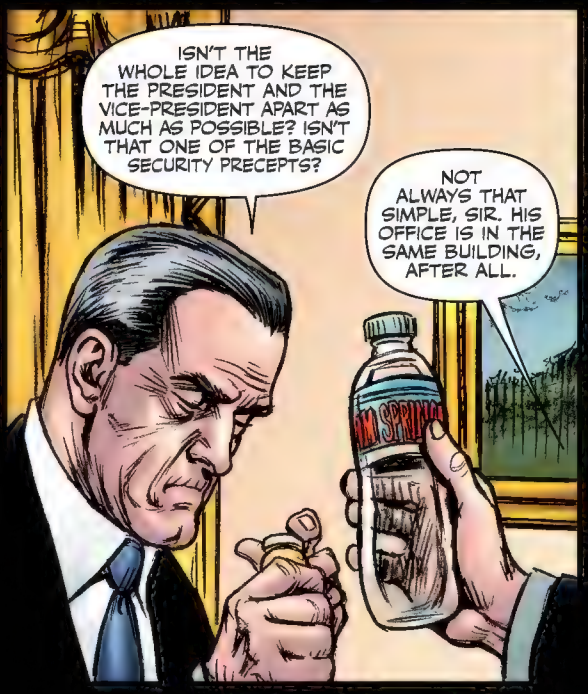
COME ON THEN, TERROR.

OFF WE GO, MATE.

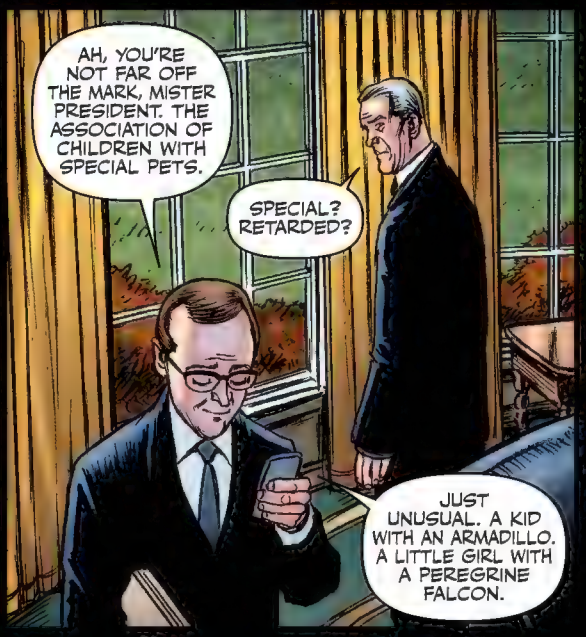
AH, FUCK.


JUST KEEP HIM AWAY FROM ME.

WE ALWAYS DO, MISTER PRESIDENT.
NO, YOU ALWAYS TRY. BUT SOMEHOW THE LITTLE GOON BREAKS THROUGH THE DEFENSES...OH, I'M GETTING A HEADACHE JUST THINKING ABOUT HIM...
TOP DRAWER, SIR.


ISN'T THE WHOLE IDEA TO KEEP THE PRESIDENT AND THE VICE-PRESIDENT APART AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE? ISN'T THAT ONE OF THE BASIC SECURITY PRECEPTS?
NOT ALWAYS THAT SIMPLE, SIR. HIS OFFICE IS IN THE SAME BUILDING, AFTER ALL.

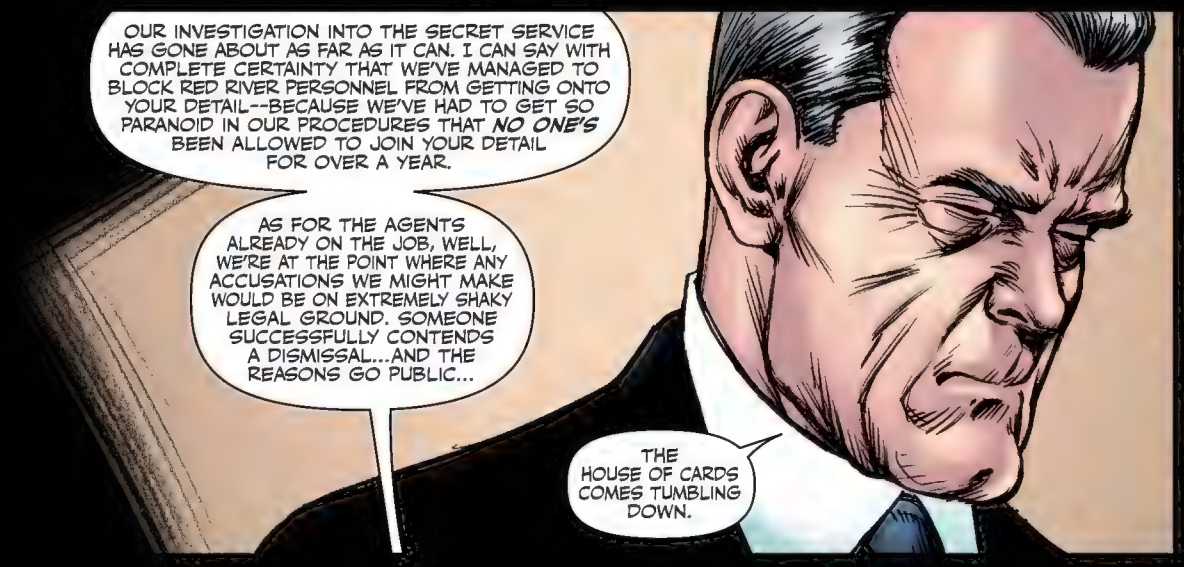
YES, BUT...OH, WELL.
WHAT'S THIS CIRCUS ACT THIS MORNING AGAIN?

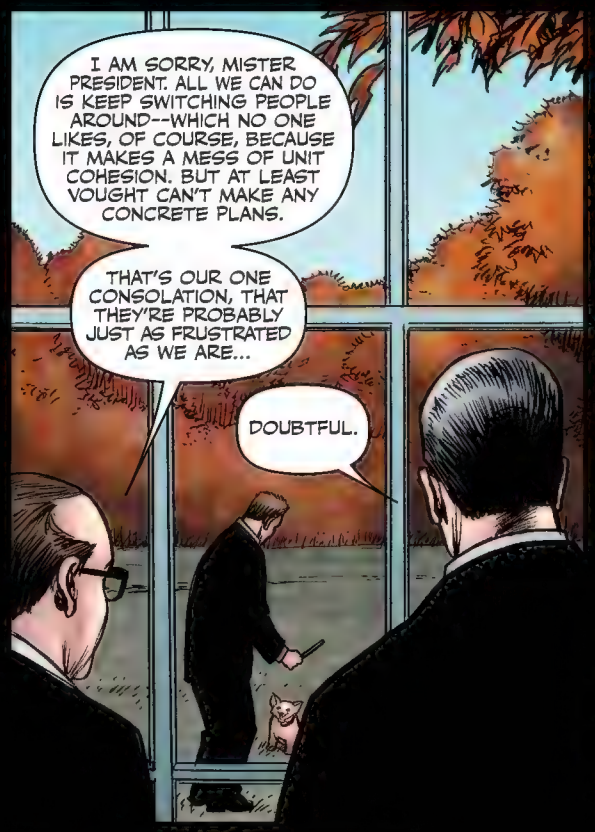

AH, YOU'RE NOT FAR OFF THE MARK, MISTER PRESIDENT. THE ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL PETS.
SPECIAL? RETARDED?
JUST UNUSUAL. A KID WITH AN ARMADILLO. A LITTLE GIRL WITH A PEREGRINE FALCON.

THESE DAYS IT ALWAYS SEEMS TO MEAN RETARDED.
WHAT'S THE DOG CALLED AGAIN?

MM? OH. MISTER FUZZY-BUZZY, SIR.
MISTER FUZZY-BUZZY...

SPEAKING OF SECURITY, HAS THERE BEEN ANY PROGRESS ON...?
OH, LORD.
I'M SORRY, SIR.

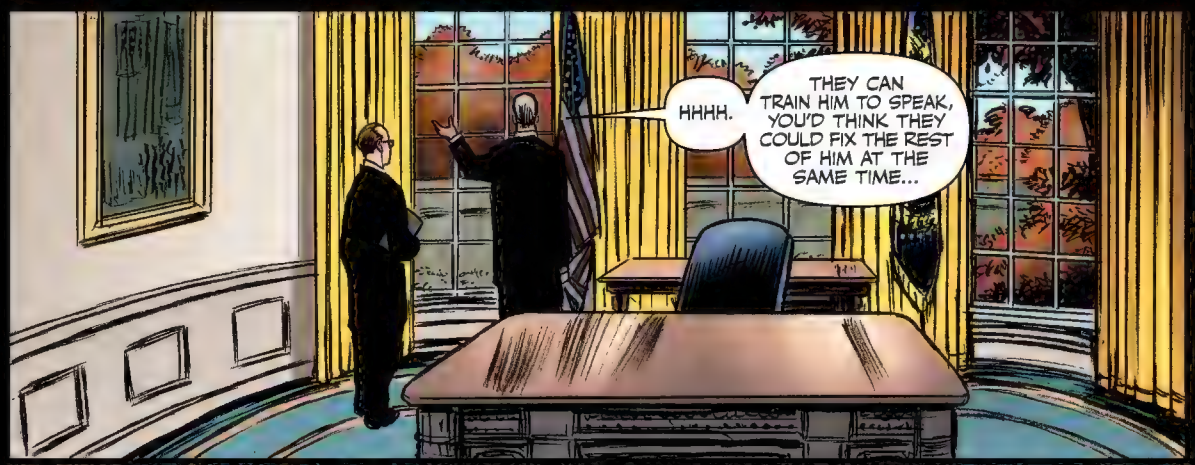

OUR INVESTIGATION INTO THE SECRET SERVICE HAS GONE ABOUT AS FAR AS IT CAN. I CAN SAY WITH COMPLETE CERTAINTY THAT WE'VE MANAGED TO BLOCK RED RIVER PERSONNEL FROM GETTING ONTO YOUR DETAIL--BECAUSE WE'VE HAD TO GET SO PARANOID IN OUR PROCEDURES THAT *NO ONE'S* BEEN ALLOWED TO JOIN YOUR DETAIL FOR OVER A YEAR.
AS FOR THE AGENTS ALREADY ON THE JOB, WELL, WE'RE AT THE POINT WHERE ANY ACCUSATIONS WE MIGHT MAKE WOULD BE ON EXTREMELY SHAKY LEGAL GROUND. SOMEONE SUCCESSFULLY CONTENDS A DISMISSAL...AND THE REASONS GO PUBLIC...
THE HOUSE OF CARDS COMES TUMBLING DOWN.


I AM SORRY, MISTER PRESIDENT. ALL WE CAN DO IS KEEP SWITCHING PEOPLE AROUND--WHICH NO ONE LIKES, OF COURSE, BECAUSE IT MAKES A MESS OF UNIT COHESION. BUT AT LEAST VOUGHT CAN'T MAKE ANY CONCRETE PLANS.
THAT'S OUR ONE CONSOLATION, THAT THEY'RE PROBABLY JUST AS FRUSTRATED AS WE ARE...
DOUBTFUL.

"THEY ONLY HAVE TO GET LUCKY ONCE, REMEMBER. IT DOES VERY LITTLE FOR YOUR PEACE OF MIND, KNOWING THAT THE MEN ASSIGNED TO WATCH YOUR BACK HAVE A VESTED INTEREST IN *NOT* TAKING A BULLET FOR THEIR PRESIDENT."

OR EVEN IN FIRING THE DAMN THING THEMSELVES...
THEY'D *NEVER* GO THAT FAR, MISTER PRESIDENT--!

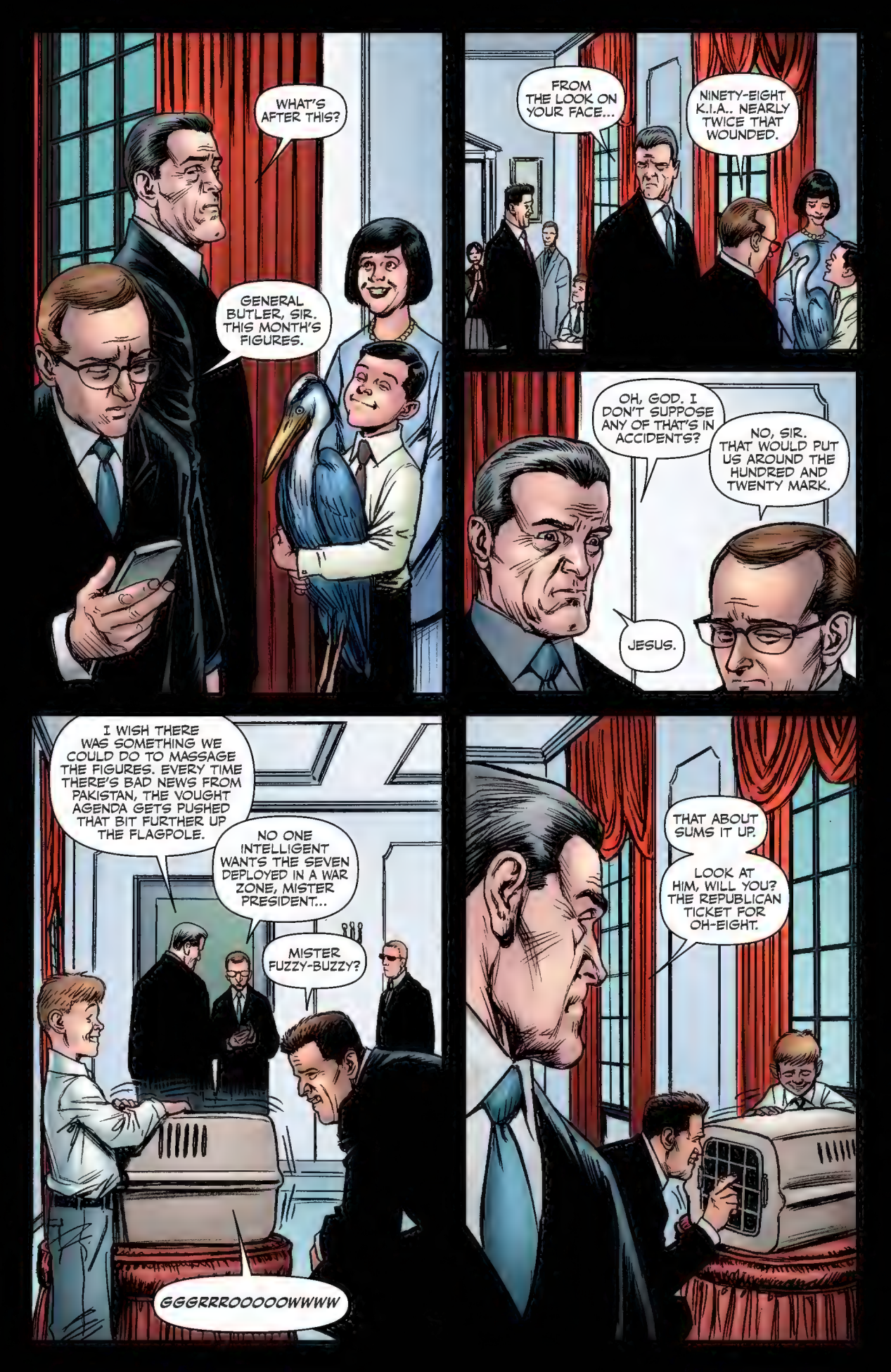
NO?
OH FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, *YOU* THROW THE STICK AND *HE* FETCHES IT! AT LEAST GET THAT MUCH RIGHT!


HHHH.
THEY CAN TRAIN HIM TO SPEAK, YOU'D THINK THEY COULD FIX THE REST OF HIM AT THE SAME TIME...

MUTHAFUCK!
GODDAMN FUCKIN' BITCH! FUCK!
LAIT DE LA MERE--!
FUCK! FUCK!
FUCKIN' WHORE!!

I'M'A KILL YOU! FUCKIN' KILL YOU, CUNT!
RRRAAAAAAHHHH!!!
JINGS.

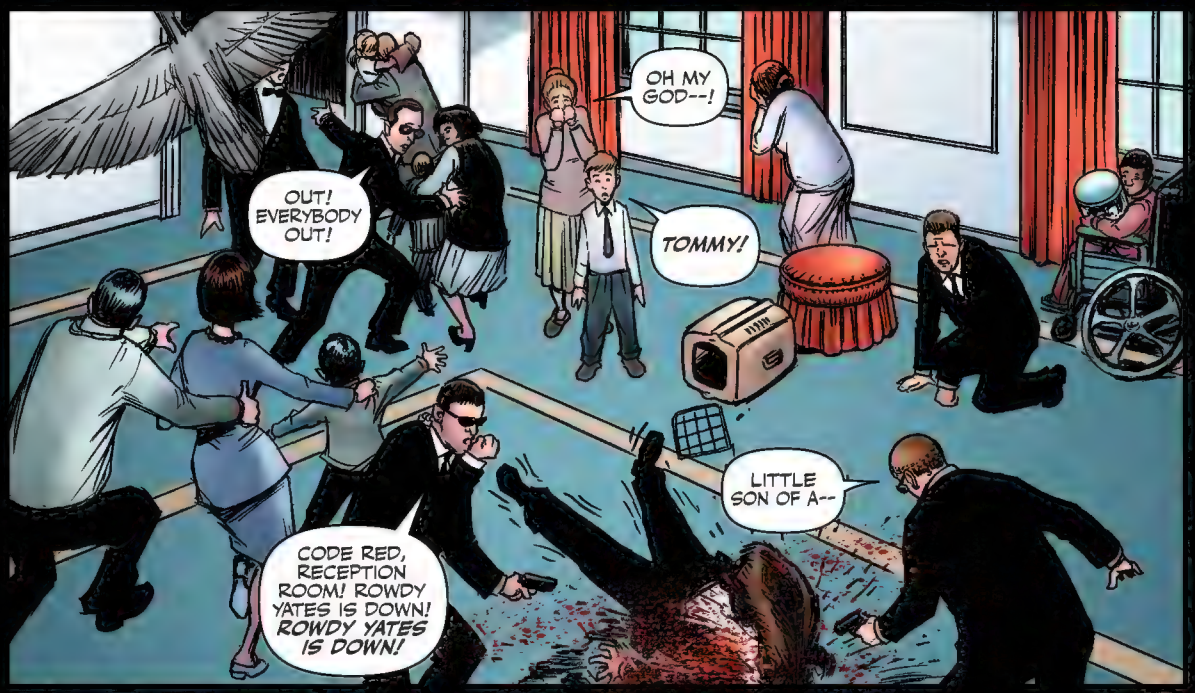
WELL, FRED REALLY IS QUITE SOMETHING, ISN'T HE, REBECCA?
FANK OO, MISTER PWESIDENT.
YOU MUST BE VERY PROUD OF HIM. THANK YOU FOR BRINGING HIM ALONG TODAY.
'ES, MISTER PWESIDENT.
AND WHO DO WE HAVE HERE...?
I'M TOMMY AND THIS IS MY WOLVERINE, TOMMY!
GRRRAAAARRROOOOWWWWRRRRR
YOU NAMED HIM AFTER... YOU KNOW, HE DOESN'T LOOK VERY HAPPY, DOES HE?
GGRRRRAAAARRRRR
I THINK MAYBE WE'LL JUST LEAVE HIM IN HIS BOX FOR NOW...
GGGRRAAAAOOOOWWWWRRRR
BUT HE CERTAINLY IS AN IMPRESSIVE ANIMAL, YOU MUST BE VERY PROUD OF HIM...
MISTER FUZZY-BUZZY?


WHAT'S AFTER THIS?
GENERAL BUTLER, SIR. THIS MONTH'S FIGURES.
FROM THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE...
NINETY-EIGHT K.I.A.. NEARLY TWICE THAT WOUNDED.
OH, GOD. I DON'T SUPPOSE ANY OF THAT'S IN ACCIDENTS?
NO, SIR. THAT WOULD PUT US AROUND THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY MARK.
JESUS.
I WISH THERE WAS SOMETHING WE COULD DO TO MASSAGE THE FIGURES. EVERY TIME THERE'S BAD NEWS FROM PAKISTAN, THE VOUGHT AGENDA GETS PUSHED THAT BIT FURTHER UP THE FLAGPOLE.
NO ONE INTELLIGENT WANTS THE SEVEN DEPLOYED IN A WAR ZONE, MISTER PRESIDENT...
MISTER FUZZY-BUZZY?
GGGRRROOOOOWWWW
THAT ABOUT SUMS IT UP.
LOOK AT HIM, WILL YOU? THE REPUBLICAN TICKET FOR OH-EIGHT.

HIM AND A BAG OF DOGSHIT. GOT TO THINK ABOUT TWENTY-SIXTEEN.
OKAY, EVERYONE, THANKS FOR BRINGING ALL YOUR WONDERFUL PETS TO VISIT THE WHITE HOUSE. IT'S BEEN TERRIFFIC MEETING THEM--AND YOU.
MISTER FUZZY-BUZZY...
GGRRRR?
I HAVE TO GO RIGHT NOW, BUT BE SURE AND ENJOY THE REST OF YOUR VISIT...THERE'S PLENTY MORE TO...TO...
WHAT THE HELL IS HE DOING?
GRRRRAAAARRRR!!!
F

AAAAAAAHH!
JESUS!
GGRRRAAARROOOOWWWRRRR

GGRRRRR! GGGRRRRR!
AAAH--AAK-- AAAAAAAHH--
NO-NO-NO, YOU'LL HIT HIM! YOU'LL HIT THE KIDS!


OH MY GOD--!
OUT! EVERYBODY OUT!
TOMMY!
LITTLE SON OF A--
CODE RED, RECEPTION ROOM! ROWDY YATES IS DOWN! ROWDY YATES IS DOWN!

GGRRRR!!

NOW! NOW! GET IT!
GGRROOW--!
GGGRRRRRRRRRRR...!
HOLY FUCKING SHIT--
OH GOD.
OH GOD.
I...
STEVE!
I GUESS YOU TWO WEREN'T RED RIVER...
NO, WE WEREN'T FUCKING GODDAMNED RED RIVER!!

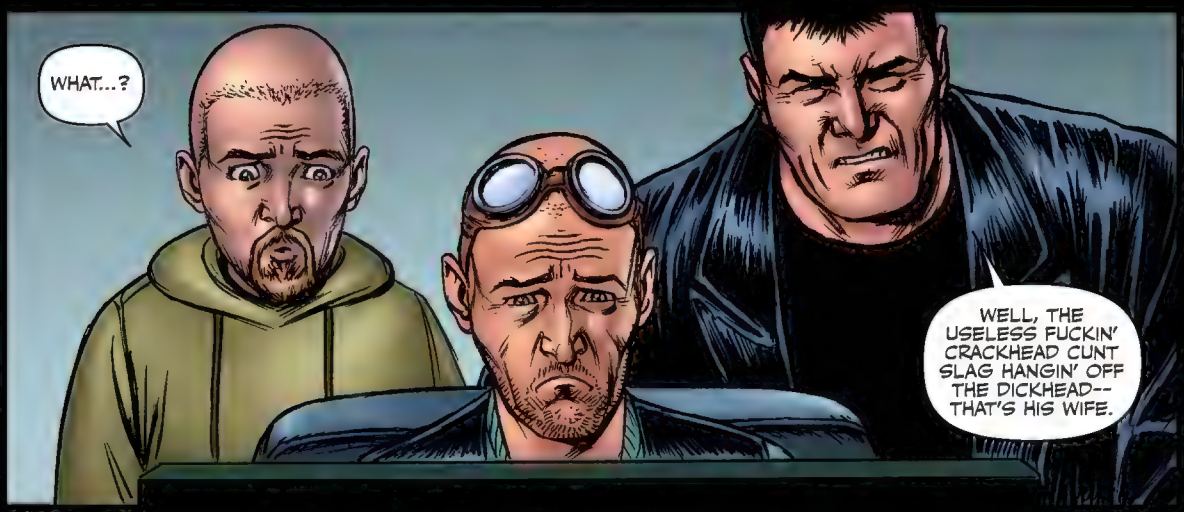
SOMEONE STICK A BOTTLE IN THE PAPER RECYCLIN'?
NO...
LEAVE A LOAD O' DISHES IN THE SINK?
NON.
FORGET TO BUY BOG ROLL?
NON.
SO WHAT THE FUCK'S WRONG WITH HIM, THEN?

IT HONESTLY WASN'T ANYTHIN' LIKE THAT, HE WENT ABSOLUTELY FUCKIN' MENTAL...
HE AIN'T PICKIN' UP AN' HE AIN'T CALLED. FRENCHIE, CAN YOU GET INTO HIS EMAIL?

BIEN SUR.
D'YOU THINK SOMEBODY SENT HIM SOMETHIN'?
YOU SAID HE WAS ONLINE AT THE TIME, DIDN'T YOU?
PASSWORD'S BIGOLTITTIES, ALL ONE WORD.

OH, DID HE TELL YOU IT?
NO.
OH, SHIT. TRY THAT ONE, QUEENBEE AT MAC DOT COM.

BLACK HOLES
Angelica Vadge
Jana Sin
Julius Kong
FUCK.


WHAT...?
WELL, THE USELESS FUCKIN' CRACKHEAD CUNT SLAG HANGIN' OFF THE DICKHEAD-- THAT'S HIS WIFE.

AN' THE OTHER ONE--
AW NO, THAT'S JANINE! THAT'S HIS WEE GIRL!

THE DIRTY FUCKIN' SLAPPER'S GOT HER DOIN' MOTHER-DAUGHTER PORN.

OH, MON PAUVRE AMI...
NO WONDER HE LOST THE BLOODY HEAD!
FUCKIN' STUPID FUCKIN' WHORE.
I CAN'T BE HAVIN' THIS.

NOT NOW. NOT WITH THE FUCKIN' SEVEN ABOUT TO BOIL OVER.
I NEED HIM SWITCHED ON, NOT RUNNIN' AROUND TRYNNA SORT OUT BOLLOCKS LIKE THIS...

BE BACK TOMORROW. BELL ME IF HE TURNS UP.
HUGHIE, NIP OUTSIDE AN' GRAB ALL THE STUFF FROM HIS DESK, WILL YOU?
YOU WANT ME TO PICK UP A LOAD O' *LITTER*...?

I WANT YOU TO PICK UP TWELVE BLEEDIN' YEARS' WORTH O' GOD KNOWS FUCKIN' WHAT. BUT IF YOU'RE ALL RIGHT WITH SOME HIPSTER TWAT READIN' ALL ABOUT STORMFRONT'S LITTLE HOLIDAY IN NEW ORLEANS--YOU JUST STAY HERE AN' SIT ON YER ARSE.
GET ON WITH IT...!

UH... AYE...
GLAD TO HEAR IT.
END OF.

DAY OF MOURNING FOLLOWS BIZARRE ATTACK
V.P. NEUMANN TO BE SWORN IN IMMEDIATELY
UNCONFIRMED REPORT: CREATURE'S OWNERS REGISTERED DEMOCRATS
FOX NEWS
SPECIAL PRESENTATION
...THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT HE DOES, IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE FUNNY?

GLAD WE AGREE.
NO, WE'RE NOT GOING TO SAY ANYTHING FOR THE NEXT SEVENTY-TWO HOURS, NOT BEYOND EXPRESSING OUR PROFOUND SHOCK. WE DON'T WANT VIC THE VEEP AND VOUGHT-AMERICAN EVEN APPEARING IN THE SAME SENTENCE.
THERE'S A TIME AND A PLACE. OURS WILL COME ONCE THE DUST HAS SETTLED.

BECAUSE AT THIS EXACT MOMENT EVERYONE IS TENSING, NOT LEAST OF ALL BUTCHER AND COMPANY, AND I DON'T WANT TO PRE-EMPT--YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE ME, I HAVE THE OTHER LINE.
MS. BRADLEY?

MM-HM. YES.
WELL, YES, IN THAT SENSE IT IS GOOD NEWS. IT'S PRECISELY THE OUTCOME WE WERE PLANNING FOR, AFTER ALL.
BUT...

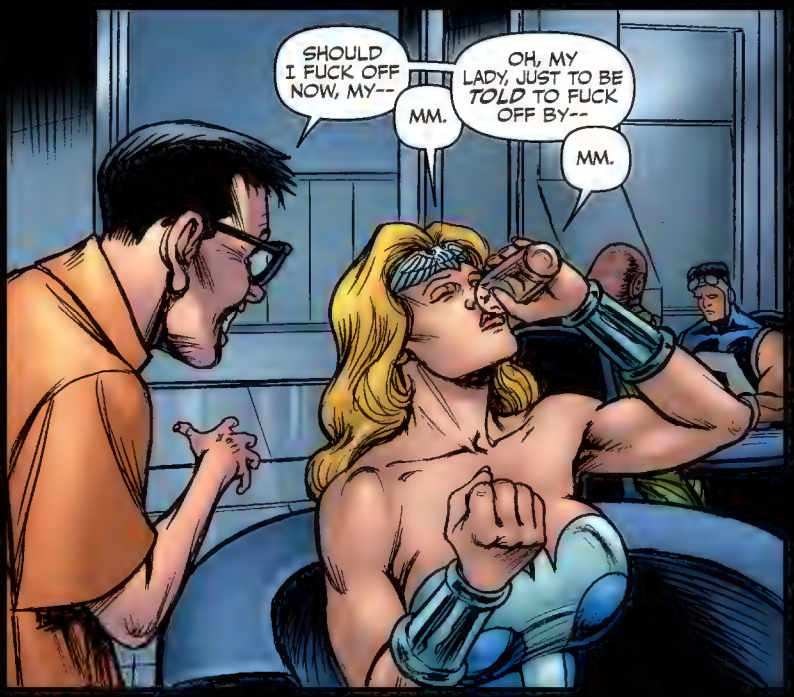
IT'S JUST THAT... I'M NOT ONE TO LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH, BUT THE FACT IS THAT A COMPLEX AND EXPENSIVE PARAMILITARY OPERATION HAS BEEN RENDERED UNNECESSARY BY THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF A HALFWIT AND A CARNIVOROUS MAMMAL.
I ACTUALLY FEEL CHEATED. IF YOU CAN BELIEVE THAT.

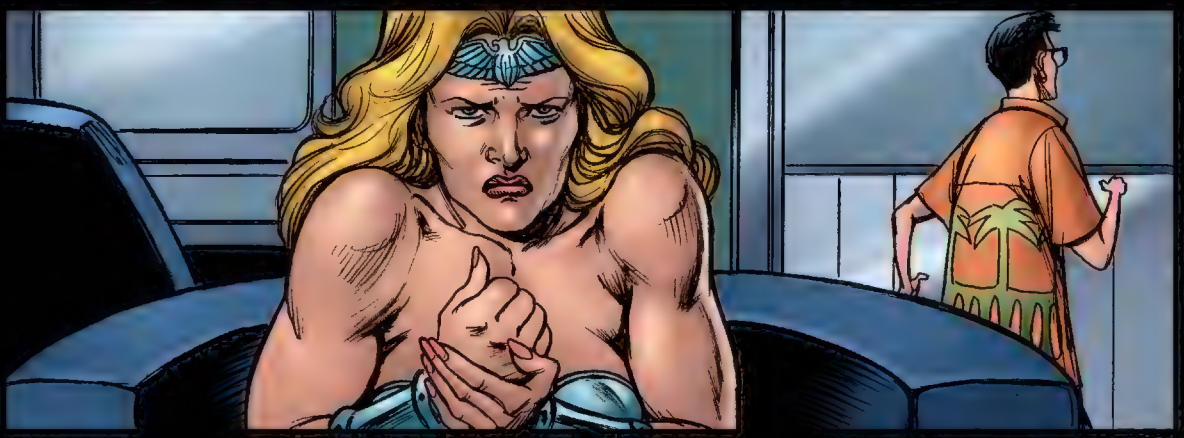
YES, IT IS UNLIKE ME. WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF PRESIDENT THE VEEP.
A PRACTICAL POINT: I WAS JUST POINTING OUT TO A RED RIVER COLLEAGUE THAT THIS COULD BE A DANGEROUS TIME. I'D LIKE YOU TO BRING IN TEAM TITANIC AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

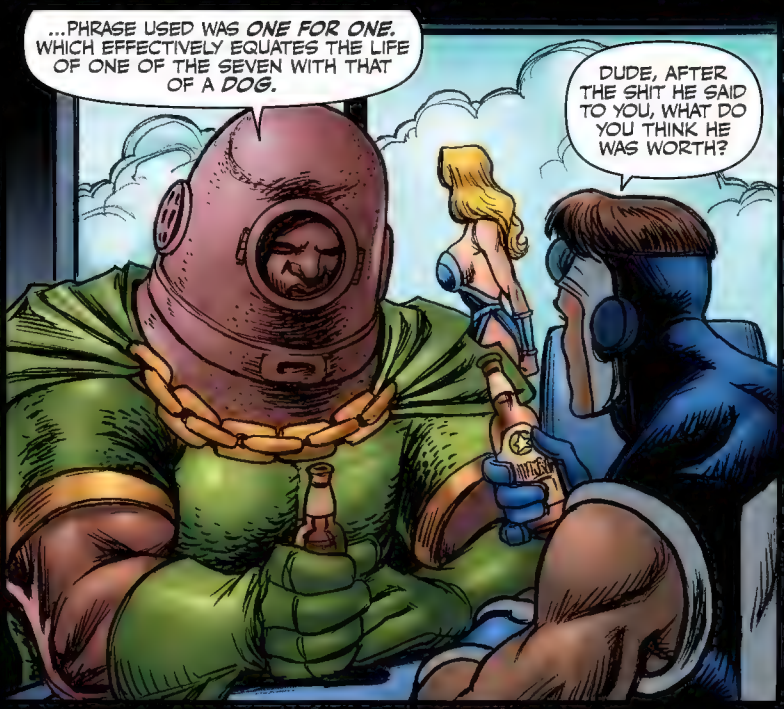
MERELY SECURITY. IF ANYONE DOES JUMP THE GUN, I'D LIKE A LITTLE MORE THAN A FAST RESPONSE UNIT BETWEEN ME AND OBLIVION.
STILL ON FOR BRUNCH TOMORROW?

WONDERFUL.

YOUR TRIPLE STOLI, O DUCHESS OF ALL THAT--
GIVE.


SHOULD I FUCK OFF NOW, MY--
MM.
OH, MY LADY, JUST TO BE *TOLD* TO FUCK OFF BY--
MM.




...PHRASE USED WAS *ONE FOR ONE*. WHICH EFFECTIVELY EQUATES THE LIFE OF ONE OF THE SEVEN WITH THAT OF A *DOG*.
DUDE, AFTER THE SHIT HE SAID TO YOU, WHAT DO YOU THINK HE WAS WORTH?

THAT IS *NOT* THE POINT.
THERE ARE CLEARLY OTHER PRIORITIES. *HIGHER* PRIORITIES. OUR LEADER'S PLANS MUST SOON BEAR FRUIT; TODAY'S EVENTS WILL CREATE THE *PERFECT CLIMATE*.
IN TIMES LIKE *THESE*...WHAT ARE *ANY OF US* WORTH...?

ARE YOU SAYING WE SHOULD GET OUT?
I AM SAYING WE SHOULD BEWARE.
DUDE, WHY DON'T YOU JUST TAKE YOUR HELMET OFF--?
I CANNOT-- MM--
THE ANCIENT ATLANTEAN CURSE THAT--
FORGET I ASKED...
I AM SAYING THAT WE ARE NOW THE SIX...
SHUT UP.
THAT SOON, WHO KNOWS, WE MAY BECOME THE FIVE... THE FOUR...
SHUT UP, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE.
OH, I FORGOT YOU TWO WERE HERE.
FIND YOURSELVES SOMETHING TO DO, WILL YOU? I'M GOING TO NEED THE ROOM.
YOU BET.

OH, YOU MIGHT RUN INTO OUR GUESTS, BY THE WAY. POINT THEM IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION IF YOU SEE THEM.
NO PROBLEM.

WHAT A PAIR OF TOOLS.

MY, MY.

HEADS UP, HOMELANDER...!
OH, THERE YOU ARE. GET A LITTLE LOST, DID WE?
LOST? YA THINK WE CAN'T FIND OUR WAY FROM--
IT'S JUST THAT YOU WERE COMING FROM COMPLETELY THE WRONG DIRECTION. WHICH MEANS YOU MUST HAVE TURNED LEFT INSTEAD OF RIGHT OUT OF THE ARRIVAL BAY, AND CIRCLED THE ENTIRE BASE.
YA KNOW YER TALKIN' ABOUT...
TROJAN!
ASTROGLIDE!
LADY ARKLITE!
STRAP-ON!
STOPCOCK!
THE TRUNCHEON!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING...?
PUT 'EM TOGETHER, AN' YOU GOT--
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE. I INVITED YOU HERE, DIDN'T I?

STOP STANDING THERE LIKE FUCKING LUNATICS AND COME AND SIT DOWN, YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE ME A MIGRAINE...
next: INTERRUPTUS

DYNAMITE DISPATCHES

Hey, Dynamite fans! Have any questions or suggestions? Email: LETTERS@DYNAMITE.NET

NEXT ISSUE:

As stormclouds gather, Vought-American enlist the mighty Team Titanic, but the Boys find themselves up against another super group entirely. Hughie finds Annie's patience running thin, while MM struggles to resolve an embarrassing family crisis without alerting the rest of the team. Meanwhile the Seven begin to fall apart, in part two of Over the Hill with the Swords of a Thousand Men.

ASK DYNAMITE:

ASK DYNAMITE: Send letters to: letters@dynamite.net
and mark them "ok to print"!

GLENN WRITES: Just have to say I am loving the various Warlord titles. Am a big Burroughs fan and nice to find a well done comic based on his work. Anyways, just want to say thank you. I've been away from comics since late 70's (middle school) but finding the Dynamite stuff has got me hooked. Looking forward to seeing how Danger Girl and Army of Darkness is..

Thanks Glenn... you saw our recent news about Lord of the Jungle, yes? We can only assume that makes you and even happier reader and that makes us a happier publisher!

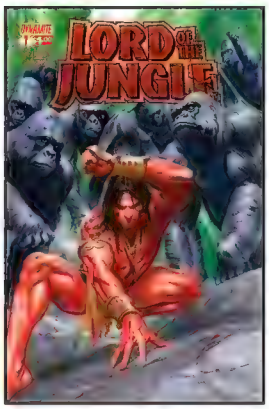
MATT WRITES: Warlord of Mars is one of the best comics out there. I just read issue #10 and the art is the best I've seen so far in the series! Stephen Sadowski and Shane Rooks are great. Please keep them around for future issues.

Steve and Shane are with us until issue #12 and then we kick off a brand new arc... joining us starting with issue #13 will be artist Edgar Salazar! It's gonna be great.

DYNAMITE IN THE NEWS:

DYNAMITE ON TWITTER!
We're putting in a renewed effort to get the Dynamite word out hour by hour via Twitter, check it:
twitter.com/DynamiteComics
Thanks to everyone who's followed us in the last couple of weeks, let's keep it going!

LORD OF THE JUNGLE BEGINS IN DECEMBER! EXPANSION OF EDGAR RICE BURROUGH'S CLASSIC TALE!



The original Lord of the Jungle returns! Dynamite is proud to announce the December release of *Lord of the Jungle*! Dynamite's Lord of the Jungle is true to Edgar Rice Burroughs original tale, savage, violent, and uncensored for the first time in its 100 year history! We are so proud and excited about this book, that we are offering the first FULL issue for the introductory price of just $1.00!

Based on the classic Edgar Rice Burroughs adventure story, Tarzan of the Apes, the first of his famous series, which initially began publication in All Story Magazine in 1912. The saga of Greystoke begins in December, written by Arvid Nelson and illustrated by Roberto Castro, and featuring covers by Alex Ross, Lucio Parillo, Ryan Sook, and Paul Renaud!

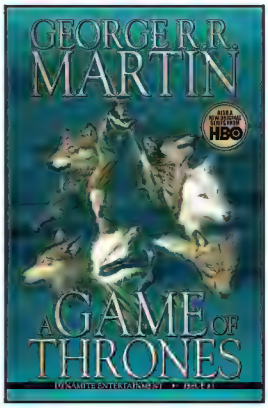
"Tarzan's DNA is in everything from super heroes to space epics," says writer Arvid Nelson. "But I was surprised at how little I knew about him, because the many adaptations wander very far from the original character. His true story is so much deeper and more interesting -- that's we're trying to bring to life in Lord of the Jungle."

"To allow the series to be accessible to fans old and new, we are offering the first issue at the Introductory Price of $1.00 for the full ENTIRE 32 page comic, as well as dedicating both of the Dynamite front gate folds of the October shipping Previews Magazine to our launch," says Dynamite Entertainment President and Publisher Nick Barrucci. "Get on board for the biggest comic book launch this December!"

DYNAMITE REVIEWS

A GAME OF THRONES #1
(MAJORSPOILERS.COM): "I think fans of the book and television series will enjoy this reading as well!"

A GAME OF THRONES #1
(GEEKSOFDOOM.COM): "I would easily give this series to both comic and non-comic fans alike. I truly loved this adaptation!"



A GAME OF THRONES #1
(BROKENFRONTIER.COM): "Overall, the creative team delivers an enjoyable adaption of the start of George R. R. Martin's expansive fantasy series.

THE LAST PHANTOM #9
(GEEKSOFDOOM.COM): "All around, a great comic. As I said, if you don't normally read The Last Phantom, this isn't a great issue to start with, but track down at least the previous two issues. They're worth the time and money!"

THE LAST PHANTOM #9
(CHRONICLEFORUM.COM): "Overall, very nice! Things are heating up action wise, the scripting is nicely paced, and Phantom lore is being dished out in tantalising drips and drabs!"

TERMINATOR/ROBOCOP: KILL HUMAN #3
(PROJECTFANBOY.COM): "You got Robocop in my Terminator! No, you got your Terminator in my Robocop! What, no one else remembers that commercial? Well, either way, the punch line is the same: two great tastes that taste great together!"

WARLORD OF MARS #10
(WEEKLYCOMICBOOKREVIEW.COM) : The plotting and counter-plotting has my interest and this issue did what a starting book in an arc should do, which is launch a story with enough momentum to get the reader to want to follow the arc. Artwise, Sadowski brought some different visions to the series. His pyramids and the lair of the Therns were intriguing, as was the hurtling flight of Carthoris and Tars Tarkas across the Martian wastes.

ROBERT JORDAN'S WHEEL OF TIME: EYE OF THE WORLD #13
(NEWSARAMA.COM "The book's dialogue comes out strong and in your face. You get the characters and their voices and the situation they are up against."

THE BOYS: BUTCHER, BAKER, CANDLESTICKMAKER #3
(COMICBOOKRESOURCES.COM): "The first two issues were good and this one was fantastic. A pity we all know this happiness does not last so thanks to all for giving us at least this one entire issue to smile along with!"

WARLORD OF MARS #9
(WEEKLYCOMICBOOKREVIEW.COM) : "Definitely buy Warlord of Mars #9 if you've got the rest. If you don't have the rest, I highly recommend the trade when it's out. Dynamite is doing some great work on Barsoom. Put on your hard hats and come on over!"

DYNAMITE ENTERTAINMENT
To discuss these issues and more, log onto the Dynamite Entertainment Message Boards at WWW.DYNAMITE.NET/BOARDS

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The BOYS™

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Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS

SIXTY-ONE

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys.**

Story by:
GARTH ENNIS

Colors by:
TONY AVIÑA

Art by:
RUSS BRAUN

Cover by:
DARICK ROBERTSON

Letters by:
SIMON BOWLAND

The Boys Created By:
ENNIS & ROBERTSON

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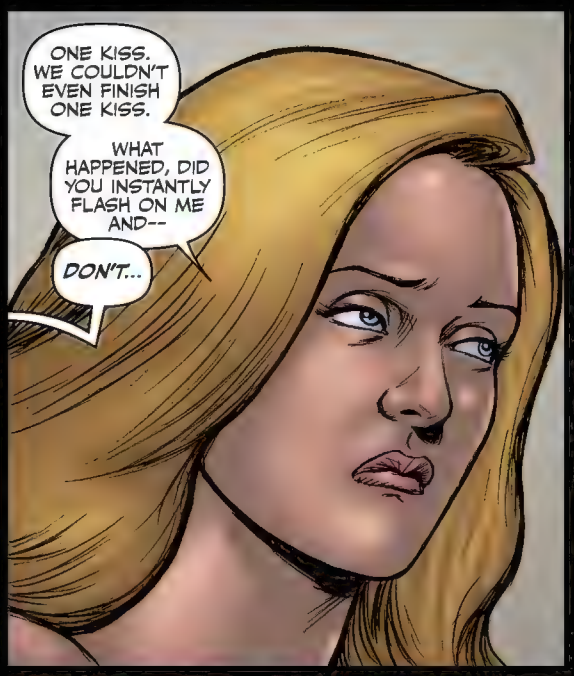
OVER THE HILL WITH THE SWORDS OF A THOUSAND MEN

part two

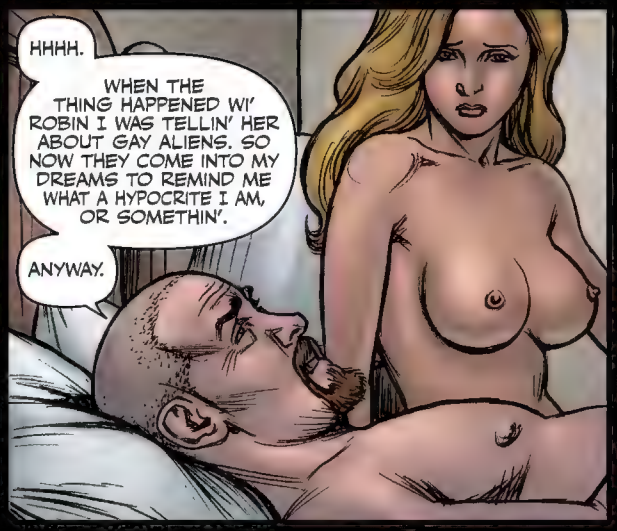

ONE KISS. WE COULDN'T EVEN FINISH ONE KISS.
WHAT HAPPENED, DID YOU INSTANTLY FLASH ON ME AND--
DON'T...

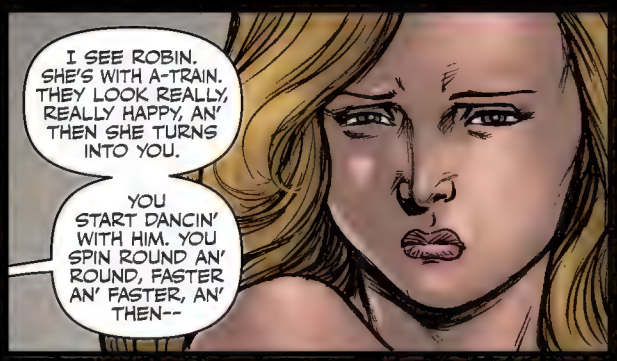
STOP THAT SHIT.

YOU KNOW WHAT I DID. YOU SAW ME DO IT.
STOP THESE AWFUL HISTRIONICS EVERY TIME IT COMES UP; EITHER LIVE WITH IT OR GET RID OF ME FOR GOOD.

ALL RIGHT, I'M SORRY. I REALLY AM. BUT IT'S NO' AS SIMPLE AS THAT, I HAD--
I HAD A DREAM...

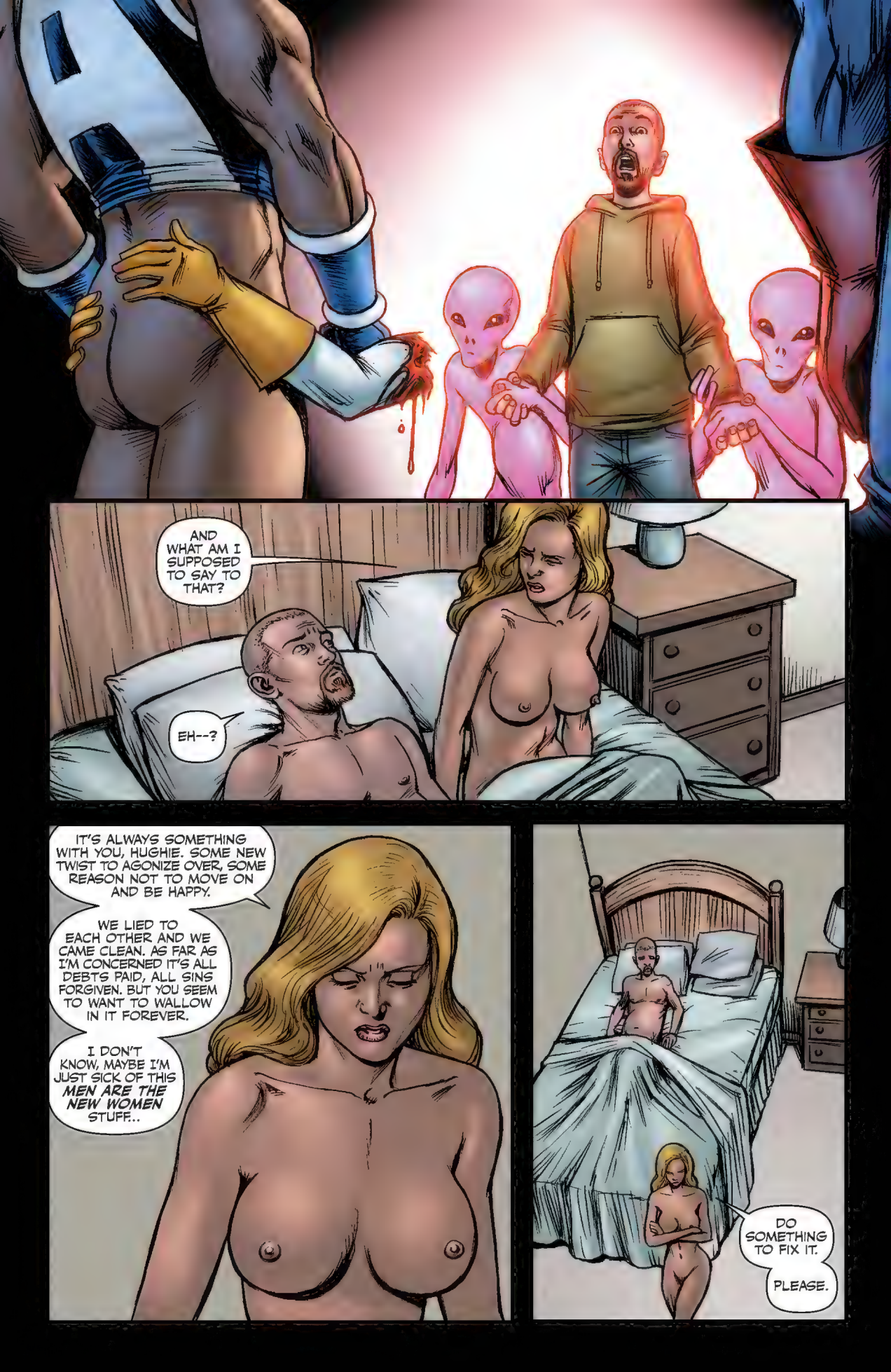
WHAT?
IT'S ONE I'VE HAD BEFORE. SORT OF A VARIATION ON A THEME.
IT'S BEEN GETTIN' WORSE.





"WELL.

"IN THIS LATEST VERSION:"


AND WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY TO THAT?
EH--?
IT'S ALWAYS SOMETHING WITH YOU, HUGHIE. SOME NEW TWIST TO AGONIZE OVER, SOME REASON NOT TO MOVE ON AND BE HAPPY.
WE LIED TO EACH OTHER AND WE CAME CLEAN. AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED IT'S ALL DEBTS PAID, ALL SINS FORGIVEN. BUT YOU SEEM TO WANT TO WALLOW IN IT FOREVER.
I DON'T KNOW, MAYBE I'M JUST SICK OF THIS MEN ARE THE NEW WOMEN STUFF...
DO SOMETHING TO FIX IT.
PLEASE.

MOMMA, C'MON, KNOCK IT OFF--
MAH BOOYYYYY
MOMMA, I GOTTA ANSWER MY PHONE--!
MAH BOOYYYYY

DAMN.
YEAH?
DADDY?

JANINE?!
DADDY, I'M SO SORRY.

JANINE-- HONEY--OH JESUS--
DADDY, I'M OKAY. I'M GOING TO BE OKAY.
HONEY, TELL ME WHERE YOU AT--I GOTTA COME GET YOU, I GOTTA--
NO, DADDY, PLEASE DON'T DO THAT...

JANINE, WHAT THE FUCK THAT FUCKIN' CUNT DO TO YOU?!

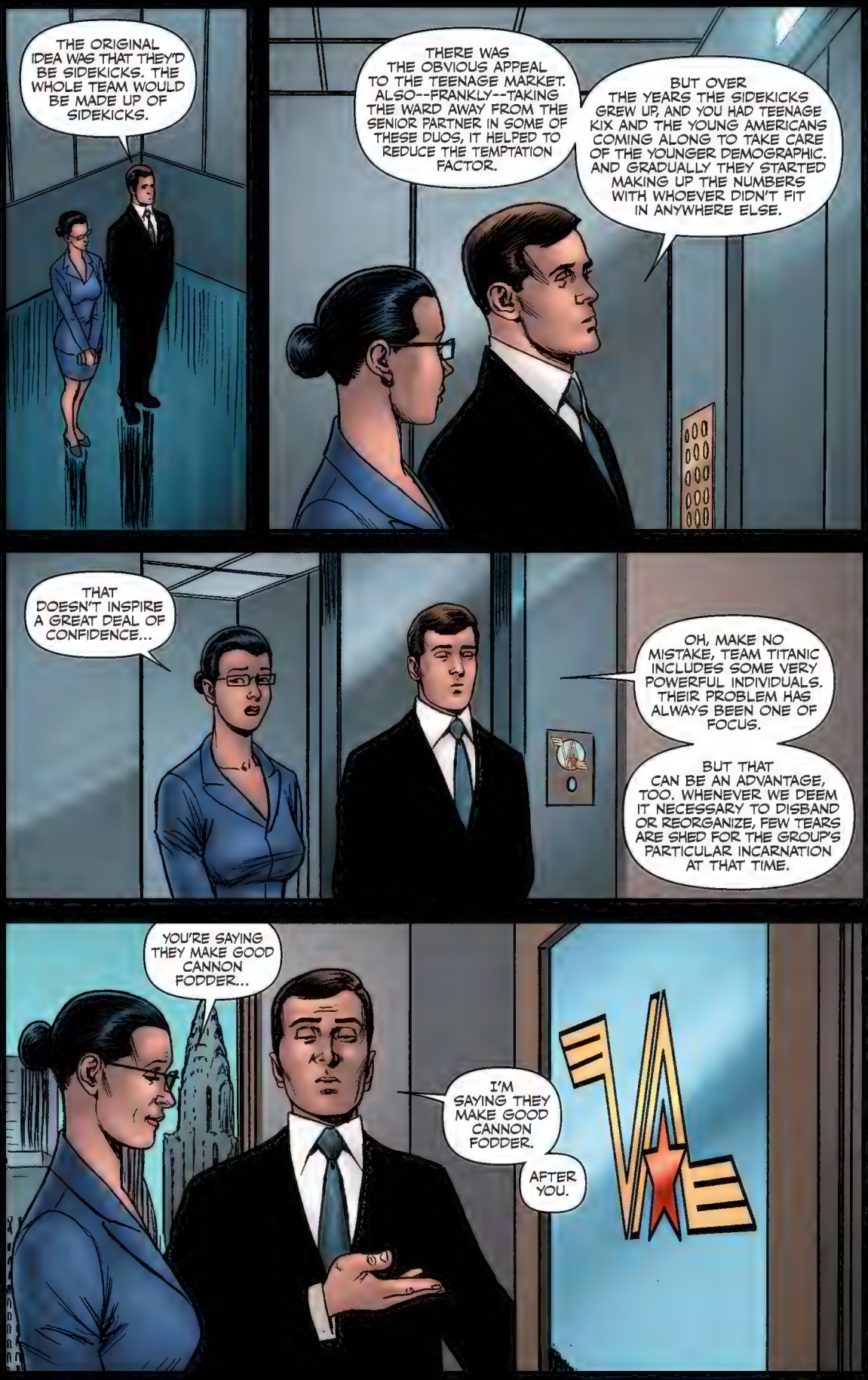
I'M SORRY.
I'M SORRY.
I AIN'T GONNA DO THAT AGAIN.
DADDY... I GOT AWAY FROM HER.

YOU DID?
JANINE, TELL ME WHERE YOU AT, I GOTTA COME GET YOU...
NO.
PLEASE JUST LISTEN TO ME FOR A SECOND.

MOM GOT ME INTO...SHE HAS THESE FRIENDS IN THE VALLEY. THEY'RE REALLY GROSS. BUT SHE WANTED TO GET BACK AT YOU, AND I WANTED TO GET BACK AT YOU--BUT--
I WAS WRONG. I WAS SO WRONG. BUT I GOT AWAY FROM HER, AND, AND I GOT MY HEAD STRAIGHT. YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME ANYMORE.

HONEY, HOW CAN I NOT WORRY ABOUT YOU? I'M SCARED OUTTA MY MIND FOR YOU, PLEASE TELL ME--
I WILL. I WILL. JUST GIVE ME SOME TIME AND I'LL CALL YOU, AND YOU CAN COME SEE ME--BUT RIGHT NOW I JUST NEED TO BE ON MY OWN.
I'M SOMEWHERE MOM CAN'T FIND ME, DADDY. AND THAT'S HOW IT'S GOING TO BE FROM NOW ON. I PROMISE YOU:

I'M NEVER GOING NEAR MOM AGAIN.


THE ORIGINAL IDEA WAS THAT THEY'D BE SIDEKICKS. THE WHOLE TEAM WOULD BE MADE UP OF SIDEKICKS.
THERE WAS THE OBVIOUS APPEAL TO THE TEENAGE MARKET. ALSO--FRANKLY--TAKING THE WARD AWAY FROM THE SENIOR PARTNER IN SOME OF THESE DUOS, IT HELPED TO REDUCE THE TEMPTATION FACTOR.
BUT OVER THE YEARS THE SIDEKICKS GREW UP, AND YOU HAD TEENAGE KIX AND THE YOUNG AMERICANS COMING ALONG TO TAKE CARE OF THE YOUNGER DEMOGRAPHIC. AND GRADUALLY THEY STARTED MAKING UP THE NUMBERS WITH WHOEVER DIDN'T FIT IN ANYWHERE ELSE.
THAT DOESN'T INSPIRE A GREAT DEAL OF CONFIDENCE...
OH, MAKE NO MISTAKE, TEAM TITANIC INCLUDES SOME VERY POWERFUL INDIVIDUALS. THEIR PROBLEM HAS ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF FOCUS.
BUT THAT CAN BE AN ADVANTAGE, TOO. WHENEVER WE DEEM IT NECESSARY TO DISBAND OR REORGANIZE, FEW TEARS ARE SHED FOR THE GROUP'S PARTICULAR INCARNATION AT THAT TIME.
YOU'RE SAYING THEY MAKE GOOD CANNON FODDER...
I'M SAYING THEY MAKE GOOD CANNON FODDER.
AFTER YOU.

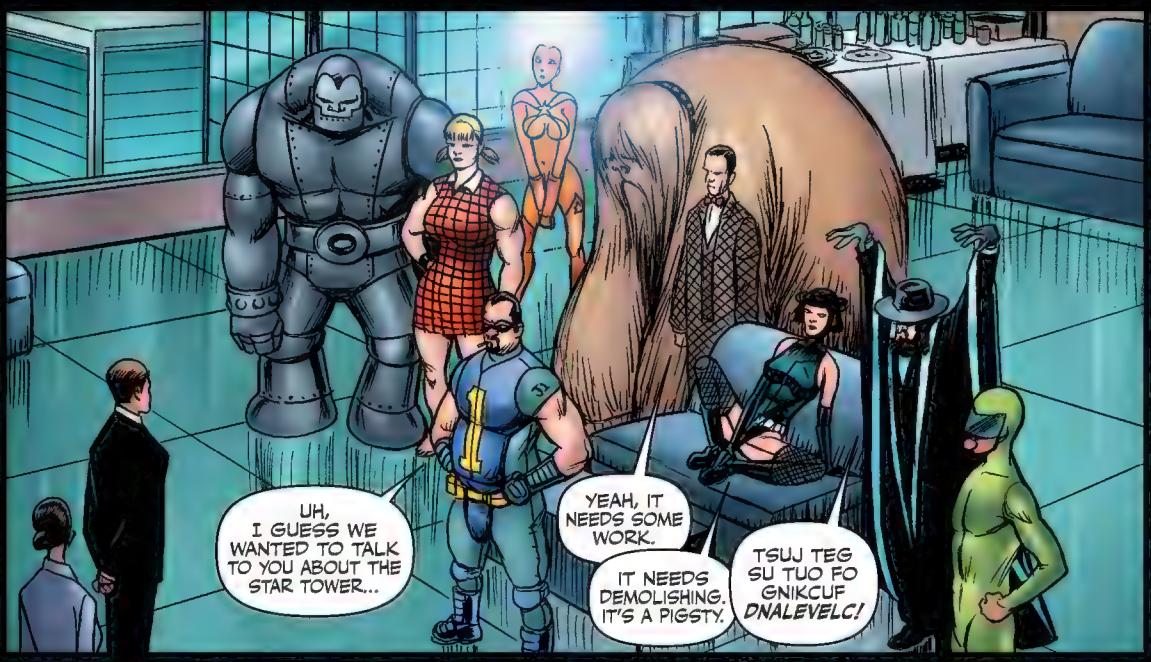
MS. BRADLEY, THIS IS JIMMY THE ONE, THE STARLIKE, REGINA DENTATA, MUZZELTOV, COUNTRY MAMA, DRY-HUMP, EARL MULCH AND SNAFFLETWAT, AND GUMCHUM.

TEAM TITANIC: MS. JESSICA BRADLEY.

YA WANT GUM?

YESTERDAY'S TRAGIC EVENTS HAVE UNDERSTANDABLY GIVEN RISE TO A DEGREE OF TENSION WITHIN THE CORPORATE COMMUNITY. VOUGHT-AMERICAN ARE DETERMINED TO GET THROUGH THIS DIFFICULT TIME WITH THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM OF DISRUPTION.
TO THAT END, YOU HAVE TWO ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES. THE FIRST IS TO PROTECT ME.

THE SECOND IS TO PROTECT MS. BRADLEY. SHE IS AS IMPORTANT TO THE FUTURE OF THIS COMPANY AS ANY OTHER SENIOR OFFICER.
OUR SECURITY PERSONNEL WILL PERFORM THEIR NORMAL DUTIES. THESE ORDERS ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR TEAM.
QUESTIONS?


UH, I GUESS WE WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE STAR TOWER...
YEAH, IT NEEDS SOME WORK.
IT NEEDS DEMOLISHING. IT'S A PIGSTY.
TSUJ TEG SU TUO FO GNIKCUF DNALEVELC!

AN' HOW 'BOUT THE DAMN ROYALTIES, THAT CONTRACT AIN'T BEEN REWRITTEN SINCE FORD WAS IN THE--
IS ANY OF THIS RELEVANT?

UH...
WELL THEN.

WHAT'S...?
THE CONTRACT.
DO YOU WANT YOUR COPY?

NO, MAN. IF THIS IS THE END, LET'S JUST SAY FUCK IT AND GO.
A VERY SHORT-SIGHTED ATTITUDE. FINANCIAL SECURITY IS NOT A MATTER TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY; I HAVE AN EXCELLENT ACCOUNTANT IF YOU--
WHATEVER...

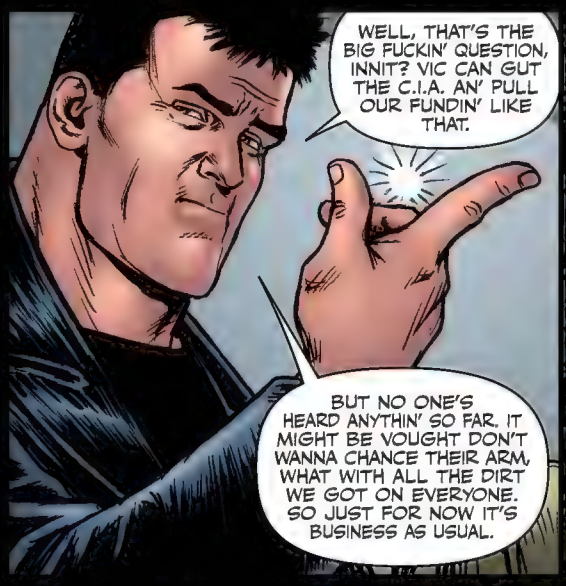
IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT THIS IS THE END OF ANYTHING. THE CURRENT CRISIS MAY YET PASS.
WITH THE HOMELANDER TALKING TO THOSE FUCKING MANIACS? YEAH, RIGHT.
I'M GONNA CHECK INTO THE MANDARIN, CHILL FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS.

YOU GIVE ME A CALL IF YOU HEAR ANYTHING, OKAY?
HMH.

GOOD GIRL, YER MAJESTY.

ALL RIGHT, BOYS, YOU MISS ME? BLOODY HELL, LOOK WHO IT IS!
SHOULD WE NAIL DOWN ALL THE CHAIRS AN' THAT? HERE, YOU BUNG THE TELLY OUT THE WINDOW, FRENCHIE'S GONNA BE HEARTBROKEN...!
UH, YEAH.
I WAS JUST EXPLAININ' ABOUT THAT.
I HAD SOME SHIT HAPPEN... I...
I STILL AIN'T SURE HOW IT'S GONNA TURN OUT. BUT I THINK THE WORST IS OVER, AN' THERE AIN'T A WHOLE LOT I CAN DO ABOUT IT ANYHOW. I JUST GOTTA WAIT.
AN' I...
I WANNA APOLOGIZE.
THAT'S ALL RIGHT, MATE. LAST TIME ANYONE PISSED ME OFF I STABBED THE CUNT TO DEATH, SO WHAT'S A BIT O' BROKEN FURNITURE BETWEEN FRIENDS?

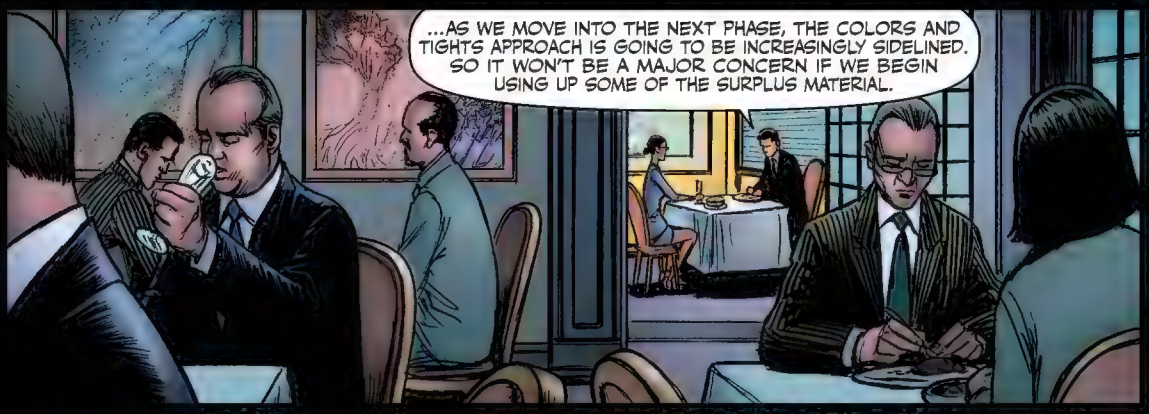
WHERE WERE YOU, ANYWAY?
EHHHRRRR FLYIN' VISIT TO SEE RAYNER. DIDN'T GET A WINK O' SLEEP.
OH SHIT, DAKOTA BOB. WE STILL EVEN OPERATIN'?

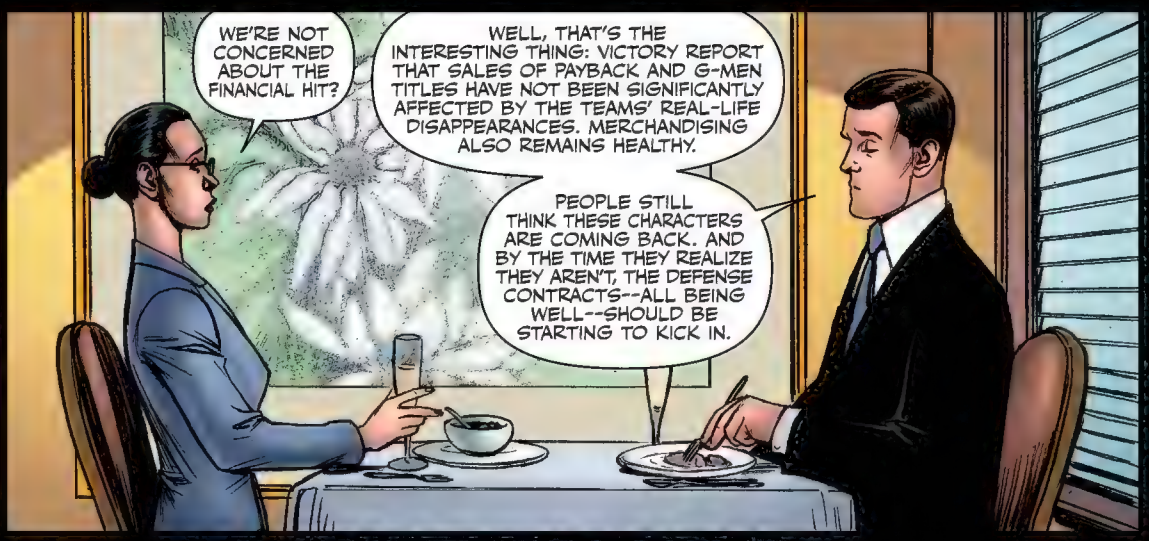

WELL, THAT'S THE BIG FUCKIN' QUESTION, INNIT? VIC CAN GUT THE C.I.A. AN' PULL OUR FUNDIN' LIKE THAT.
BUT NO ONE'S HEARD ANYTHIN' SO FAR. IT MIGHT BE VOUGHT DON'T WANNA CHANCE THEIR ARM, WHAT WITH ALL THE DIRT WE GOT ON EVERYONE. SO JUST FOR NOW IT'S BUSINESS AS USUAL.

TELL THAT TO THE BLOODY HOMELANDER...
EXACTLY. SO WE CARRY ON DIGGIN', WE KEEP UP THE SURVEILLANCE.
IN YOUR CASE, THAT MEANS GOIN' THROUGH THE FILES ONE MORE TIME, JUST IN CASE WE MISSED--
AW, YOU GOTTA BE SHITTIN' ME! AGAIN?

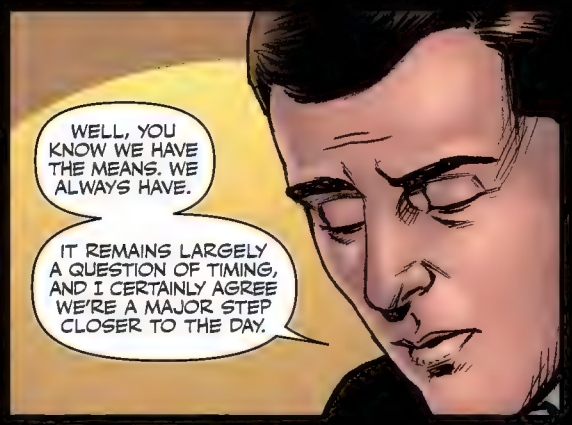
WITH A FINE TOOTHCOMB, AS THEY SAY.
YOU KNOW HOW MANY TIMES I--
YOU WANNA USE MY COMPUTER? THINK YOURS IS ON THE BLINK AT THE MINUTE.
FUCK...!

UM...ARE WE NO' GONNA...
I MEAN THE THING WI' HIM AN' HIS--
HIS BUSINESS IS HIS BUSINESS.


...AS WE MOVE INTO THE NEXT PHASE, THE COLORS AND TIGHTS APPROACH IS GOING TO BE INCREASINGLY SIDELINED. SO IT WON'T BE A MAJOR CONCERN IF WE BEGIN USING UP SOME OF THE SURPLUS MATERIAL.

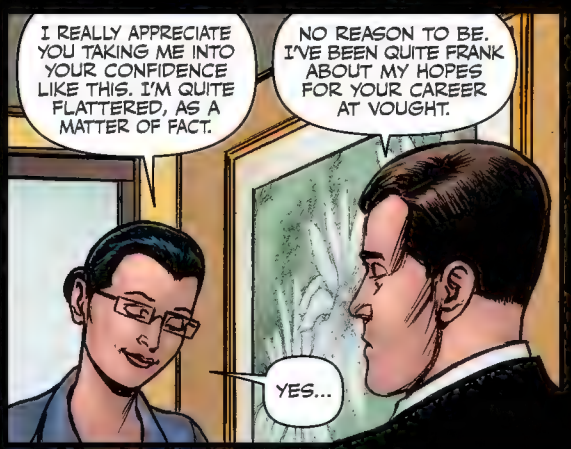

WE'RE NOT CONCERNED ABOUT THE FINANCIAL HIT?
WELL, THAT'S THE INTERESTING THING: VICTORY REPORT THAT SALES OF PAYBACK AND G-MEN TITLES HAVE NOT BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED BY THE TEAMS' REAL-LIFE DISAPPEARANCES. MERCHANDISING ALSO REMAINS HEALTHY.
PEOPLE STILL THINK THESE CHARACTERS ARE COMING BACK. AND BY THE TIME THEY REALIZE THEY AREN'T, THE DEFENSE CONTRACTS--ALL BEING WELL--SHOULD BE STARTING TO KICK IN.

THE TRICK, OF COURSE, WILL BE FOR US TO SUCCESSFULLY REACH THE NEXT PHASE. HENCE TEAM TITANIC.
SO LONG AS WE'RE, AH, REALLOCATING PERSONNEL...WHAT ABOUT THE HOMELANDER AND HIS EXTRACURRICULAR PURSUITS?
IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IF WE'RE GOING TO PUT ANYONE OUT TO GRASS...


WELL, YOU KNOW WE HAVE THE MEANS. WE ALWAYS HAVE.
IT REMAINS LARGELY A QUESTION OF TIMING, AND I CERTAINLY AGREE WE'RE A MAJOR STEP CLOSER TO THE DAY.

MM.
WHAT ARE THE MEANS?

YOU'VE NEVER TOLD ME.
NO, I HAVEN'T.
HE SPENT THE FIRST PART OF HIS LIFE CONFINED IN A ROOM WITH A NUCLEAR WEAPON. WE'VE TAKEN A LOT OF RISKS WITH THE HOMELANDER IN THE NAME OF PROFIT, BUT WE WEREN'T GOING TO UNLEASH POWER LIKE HIS WITHOUT MAINTAINING AN ULTIMATE SANCTION.
WOULD A NUKE WORK?
OF COURSE.
HEROGASM. YOU'RE GOING TO DROP IT ON HEROGASM.
THAT'S CERTAINLY BEEN DISCUSSED. BUT IF WE EVER REACH THAT STAGE OUR PROBLEMS WILL INVOLVE MUCH MORE THAN A SINGLE INDIVIDUAL.
BESIDES, NO MATTER WHAT THE LOCATION, YOU CAN'T DETONATE A DEVICE LIKE THAT AND EXPECT IT TO PASS UNNOTICED. WE'D QUITE SIMPLY NEVER HEAR THE END OF IT.
SO...?
SO, OUR PLAN FOR THE HOMELANDER IS SPECIFIC TO HIM ALONE. I'LL SHOW YOU THE DETAILS WHEN WE'RE BACK AT THE OFFICE, IF YOU LIKE.

AH...YES. YES, I WOULD.
THE CHECK, PLEASE.

I REALLY APPRECIATE YOU TAKING ME INTO YOUR CONFIDENCE LIKE THIS. I'M QUITE FLATTERED, AS A MATTER OF FACT.
NO REASON TO BE. I'VE BEEN QUITE FRANK ABOUT MY HOPES FOR YOUR CAREER AT VOUGHT.
YES...

NEVER MORE SO THAN WHEN YOU INSTRUCTED TEAM TITANIC TO LOOK AFTER ME. I WAS QUITE TAKEN ABACK BY THAT, YOU MADE ME FEEL VERY SAFE.
BUT I SHOULD TELL YOU, I FEEL SAFE AROUND YOU ANYWAY.

HMM.
I'M NOT SURE IF I SHOULD TELL YOU, MS. BRADLEY.

BUT I FEEL I CAN RELAX AROUND YOU.

OH.
OH SHIT.
BUTCHER?

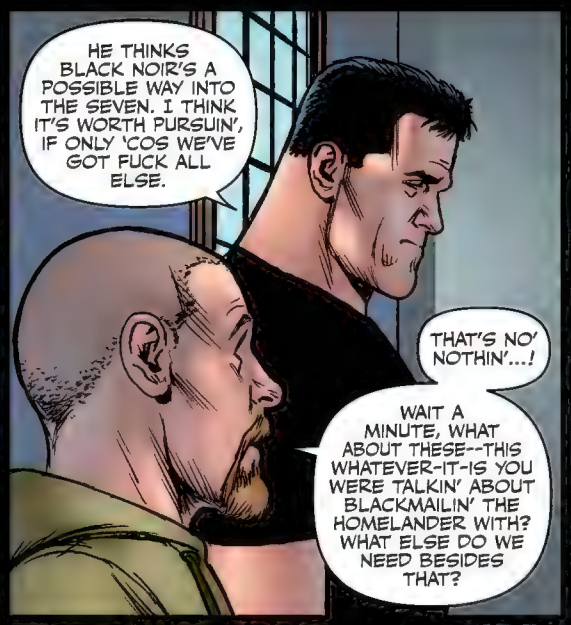
YEAH?
GET READY TO BE ONE SMUG MUTHAFUCKA.

HERE, THIS SOUNDS ALL RIGHT.
YOU REMEMBER THE IDENT CODES I FOUND ON THE REQUEST FOR BLACK NOIR'S A.V.8? THE PRIORITY CLASSIFICATION, GOT CANCELLED THE SAME DAY?
UH...
I SAID ONE CODE WAS BRADLEY, THE OTHER WAS F.S. OH-OH-OH: MEANIN' ZERO-ZERO-ZERO. I TOLD YOU IT WAS A DEAD END.

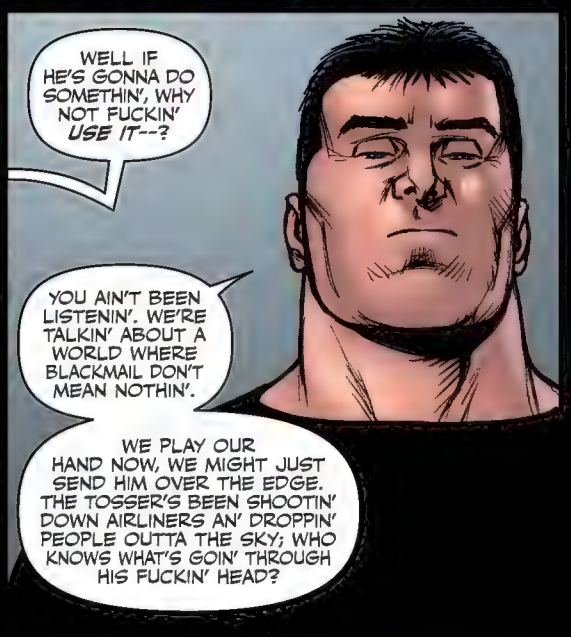
IT AIN'T ZERO-ZERO-ZERO, IT'S OH-OH-OH. I JUST SAID WHAT I THOUGHT I SEEN.
WHO THE FUCK PUTS THREE LETTER OHS TOGETHER...?

I AIN'T FEELIN' ALL THAT SMUG YET, MATE.
YOU WILL. I DID THE SEARCH ON THE WRONG CODE.
YOU CALL THE LEGEND AN' GET ME INTO THE VOUGHT SYSTEM TODAY, AN' I JUST MIGHT GIVE YOU BLACK FUCKIN' NOIR ON A PLATE.

THAT'LL MEAN GOIN' TO SEE HIM...
BLACK NOIR AGAIN? I THOUGHT YOU SAID THAT WAS NOTHIN'?
AIN'T QUITE SURE.


HE THINKS BLACK NOIR'S A POSSIBLE WAY INTO THE SEVEN. I THINK IT'S WORTH PURSUIN', IF ONLY 'COS WE'VE GOT FUCK ALL ELSE.
THAT'S NO' NOTHIN'...!
WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT ABOUT THESE--THIS WHATEVER-IT-IS YOU WERE TALKIN' ABOUT BLACKMAILIN' THE HOMELANDER WITH? WHAT ELSE DO WE NEED BESIDES THAT?

VOUS ETES BEHIND THE TIMES, PETIT HUGHIE. WATCH THE TAPES, SEE THE HOMELANDER TALK TO HIS REFLECTION LIKE THE MADDEST BASTARD.
IT WILL BE TOO LATE, HE TELLS US. HE WILL BE LE ROI D'ENFER.


WELL IF HE'S GONNA DO SOMETHIN', WHY NOT FUCKIN' *USE IT*--?
YOU AIN'T BEEN LISTENIN'. WE'RE TALKIN' ABOUT A WORLD WHERE BLACKMAIL DON'T MEAN NOTHIN'.
WE PLAY OUR HAND NOW, WE MIGHT JUST SEND HIM OVER THE EDGE. THE TOSSER'S BEEN SHOOTIN' DOWN AIRLINERS AN' DROPPIN' PEOPLE OUTTA THE SKY; WHO KNOWS WHAT'S GOIN' THROUGH HIS FUCKIN' HEAD?

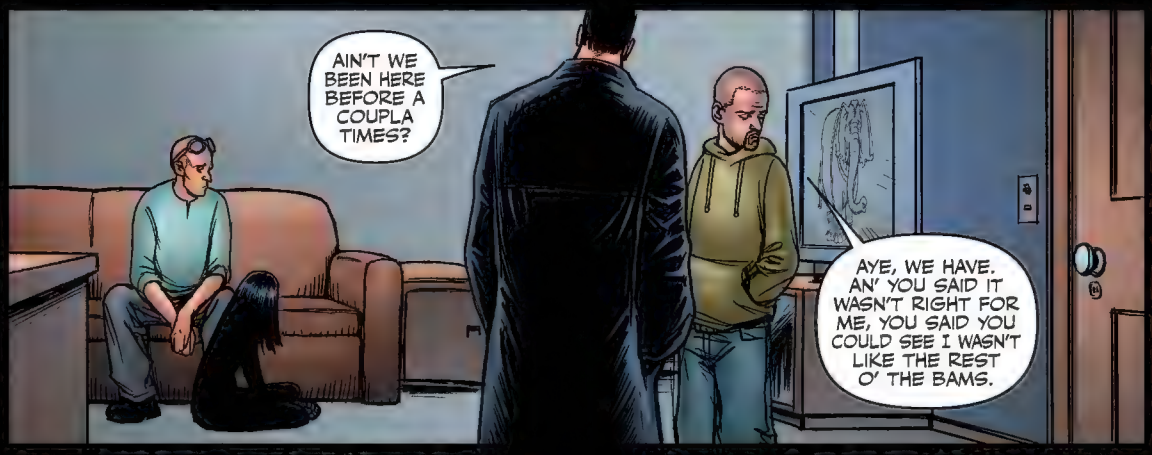
WE DON'T WANNA EMBARRASS HIM.
WE WANNA SHORT-CIRCUIT THE CUNT.

UH, CAN I'VE A QUICK WORD WI' YOU?
CAN IT WAIT?

NO' REALLY.
I'VE BEEN THINKIN' A LOT ABOUT THE WAY THINGS ARE. AN' I'VE DECIDED I WANNA STOP--
OH FUCKIN' HELL, NOT AGAIN...!

WHAT?
HOW MANY BLEEDIN' TALKS'VE WE HAD THAT START WITH YOU THINKIN' ABOUT THE WAY THINGS ARE? YOU CAN'T HANDLE THIS, YOU DON'T LIKE THAT, YOU NEED MORE FUCKIN' TIME OFF.
IS THERE ANY CHANCE AT ALL O' YOU FINALLY TWIGGIN' WHAT WE DO HERE AN' SORTIN' YERSELF OUT? AN' ONCE AN' FOR FUCKIN' ALL, MAKIN' YER MIND UP...?

AYE, I KEEP HEARIN' THAT. WELL, YOU'LL BE PLEASED TO HEAR I'VE MADE A BLOODY DECISION: I'M HAVIN' NOTHIN' ELSE TO DO WI' VIOLENCE.
I'LL INVESTIGATE, I'LL PLANT BUGS, I'LL DO WHATEVER'S NEEDED. BUT I'M NO' FUCKIN' HURTIN' FOLK EVER AGAIN--ALL RIGHT?


AIN'T WE BEEN HERE BEFORE A COUPLA TIMES?
AYE, WE HAVE. AN' YOU SAID IT WASN'T RIGHT FOR ME, YOU SAID YOU COULD SEE I WASN'T LIKE THE REST O' THE BAMS.

I SAID IF YOU HAD A PROBLEM YOU COULD COME AN' TALK TO ME ABOUT IT. I DIDN'T MEAN GIVE ME AN ULTIMATUM AN' TELL ME TO FUCK MYSELF.
AW, THAT'S NO' WHAT I'M DOIN'...!

I'M JUST TRYNNA--I'M SAYIN' THIS SHITE GETS TO ME. I CAN'T JUST FORGET IT THE WAY YOU CAN, THE THINGS I'VE SEEN AN' THE THINGS I'VE DONE ARE WITH ME.
THEY'RE IN MY DREAMS. THEY'RE FUCKIN' UP MY LIFE. AN'--
QU'EST-CE QUE C'EST THAT SMELL...?

THAT'S THE RANK SMELL O' JUSTICE IN YER NOSTRILS, FROGGY--AN' ALL THE GARLIC IN ROME AIN'T GONNA WASH IT AWAY!

THAT'S THE SMELL O' NOW YA GOTTA ANSWER TO PARALACTIC...!

next: ASSASSINATION RUN

DYNAMITE DISPATCHES

Hey, Dynamite fans! Have any questions or suggestions? Email: LETTERS@DYNAMITE.NET

NEXT ISSUE:

The new regime takes power in Washington DC, forcing the Boys to go on the offensive and Hughie to reveal a long-kept secret. Meanwhile at Vought-American other secrets are revealed, as Frenchie and the Female do what they do best. Rayner ponders high treason, the Homelander sets loose the dogs of war, and Butcher gives Hughie an unexpected present- in part three of Over The Hill With The Swords Of A Thousand Men.

ASK DYNAMITE:

ASK DYNAMITE: Send letters to:
letters@dynamite.net
and mark them "ok to print"!

Jason writes: Just wanted to say I am a huge Warehouse 13 fan and love the comics. It's my understanding that there's only going to be 5 issues is this correct and if it is why are there only going to be 5?

Right now our plans are for 5 issues, each featuring a rotating writer team from the show itself! We hope to do more, but fans need to get the word out about the book and get to the stores to grab their copies!

DAVID WRITES: I am wondering what is to become of the Green Hornet Year One series as it ended with Issue #12, Is there a Year Two in progress? I loved the series as many fans have also, I still would not like to see it go in such a short run. Thank You.

That's all the classic Green Hornet for now, as matt had wrapped up his story in those 12 issues. We're working on some big pulp-y goodness for 2012 and the Hornet just may find himself a part of it (like it or not!)

TERESA WRITES: I just finished reading The Boys: Butcher, Baker, Candlestickmaker #4 and all I can say is "WOW". That was one of the most brutal, gut-wrenching, powerful and affecting stories I've ever read. It just hits you in the gut and you don't mind. No story has ever done such an amazing job of establishing the mind-set and motivation of a character as this one did. Even Hughie's tragedy couldn't equal this. The Boys has always been a cringingly great, must-read book for me but this side-series issue sealed it... I can't live without The Boys!!

All we can say is THANKS, Teresa (and keep reading).

DYNAMITE IN THE NEWS:

DYNAMITE ON TWITTER!
We're putting in a renewed effort to get the Dynamite word out hour by hour via Twitter, check it:
twitter.com/DynamiteComics
Thanks to everyone who's followed us in the last couple of weeks, let's keep it going!

THE LONE RANGER RIDES AGAIN AT DYNAMITE ENTERTAINMENT

Dynamite Entertainment and **Classic Media** welcome the return of America's quintessential Western hero - ***The Lone Ranger*** to the comic world! The masked man returns with a new #1 in January 2012 as an ongoing series. This new *The Lone Ranger* comic series kicks off with a six-part story called "Hard Country." To allow new fans to jump into the series, the first two issues will be included within a larger story. It will then move into a longer, serialized tale, respecting the excellent template provided by Brett Matthews and Sergio Cariello with John Cassaday, setting off on a new trail.

At the end of the Matthews series, The Lone Ranger and Tonto were ready to strike out in the old west, fighting for what is right and helping those in need. "Hard Country" is about the old west striking back - a harsh environment where only the tough really make it. This is the story about these two American legends, early in their development, as they learn this bleak reality. While they're not going to fold, they will come to see that this is a hard task they've set for themselves. A hard task in a vast "hard country."

"*The Lone Ranger* #1 begins our Hard Country arc with a heart-breaking tale of loss that holds a mirror up to John Reid's past," says writer Ande Parks. "The man John Reid has become in his *The Lone Ranger* identity was shaped by tragic loss. Now he sees that loss on the faces of a new generation. Can one man make a difference in the lives of a father and his children whose world is crumbling? The Lone Ranger is damn well going to try!"

"Kudos to Ande and Esteve doing an incredible job leading in to *The Lone Ranger* #1 and following up Brett, Sergio, and John's series so successfully with *The Lone Ranger: Death of Zorro* series, which has received a considerable amount of critical acclaim," said Dynamite President and Publisher Nick Barrucci. "*The Lone Ranger: Death of Zorro* showed fans that Ande and Esteve were the right successors for the series. They "know" *The Lone Ranger*, and are making the series their own. Fans will be excited when they read the first issue, and with covers by Award-Winning artists including an Alex Ross painted cover and Francesco Francavilla as the ongoing cover artist, *The Lone Ranger* will be a must-read book!"

"*The Lone Ranger* is arguably the most popular Western character of all time and we are thrilled to team up with Dynamite Entertainment to introduce fans to another adventure," said Nicole Blake EVP, Global Marketing & Consumer Products, Classic Media.

Here are some of the critic's reactions for *The Lone Ranger: Death of Zorro* series:

"Anyone who naturally finds themselves drawn to the legends of *Zorro* or *The Lone Ranger* will be enraptured by this crossover." - Comics Bulletin

"The *Death of Zorro* is a solid read!" - Major Spoilers

"*The Lone Ranger: The Death of Zorro* is, at its heart, the epitome of a good western story. It's the story of good people struggling against bad people. It's the story of a road dusty hero avenging a fallen hero." - Invest Comics

"A few months back I mentioned in a review that Dynamite currently publishes the finest comics. *The Death of Zorro* is another clear example proving that point.." - Inside Pulse

DYNAMITE REVIEWS

KIRBY: GENESIS #4
(GRAHAMCRACKERS.COM): "Kurt Busiek and Alex Ross continue their contribution to the Kirby Legacy. Busiek's storyline continues at a nice pace and Alex Ross's art is beyond amazing. As the villians' plan takes root (literally!) our heroes begin interacting. And all is not smooth sailing. And speaking of sailing, Kirby and his new friends have been flushed down into the bowels of the earth only to find new mysteries. With the promise of two new spin-off series coming soon, it's good to know that the heroes of yesterday are in good hands."

THE GREEN HORNET GOLDEN AGE: REMASTERED
(SCOOP.DIAMONDGALLERIES.COM) : "This is the perfect read for a rainy afternoon when you are tired of innumerable crises, secret worlds and people who can jump between dimensions. The Green Hornet, always one of the most realistic characters in history, has found a place at Dynamite entertainment. And they are showing him the respect he deserves."

WARLORD OF MARS #10
(SCOOP.DIAMONDGALLERIES.COM) : "Stephen Sadowski's work on this issue reminds us that denser storytelling is indeed possible on Mars. We've been huge fans – much to our initial surprise – of this series and its spin-offs. Here's an issue that increased our enjoyment of an already entertaining series."

STAN LEE'S HOW TO WRITE COMIC BOOKS
CWR.COMICSWAITINGROOM.COM: "Sometimes you can just look at a book and say "Yep- that's going to be a massively popular Christmas gift," and this is one of those times. STAN LEE'S HOW TO WRITE COMICS benefits from having a huge name behind it, some excellent production design, and some good advice that people can use, making it an easy winner for someone looking to buy something cool for a young writer this holiday season."

ZORRO RIDES AGAIN #4
(SCOOP.DIAMONDGALLERIES.COM) : "In addition to illustrating the solid covers featured on the series, Matt Wagner has been writing some of the best Zorro stories to surface since the daily strip by Don McGregor and Tom Yeats disappeared years ago. Zorro Rides Again #4 continues Wagner's daring ride with the character, injecting a major change into it that will be hard to ignore. The coloring is still a bit muted for our tastes, but artist Esteve Polls tells the story well."

THE GREEN HORNET: YEAR ONE #12
(SCOOP.DIAMONDGALLERIES.COM) : "Writer (and cover artist) Matt Wagner and artist Aaron Campbell wrap up another story arc and the series detailing the early adventures of The Green Hornet. Setting up what would become the familiar operating practices of Britt Reid and Kato for years to come, Wagner and Campbell have done a bang-up job adding grit and hardboiled determination to both the good guys and bad guys in the story. Very enjoyable stuff."

VAMPIRELLA #10
(COMICSBULLETIN.COM): "Vampirella is visceral action-horror exquisitely rendered by substitute artist Huebert Khan Michael. A surprise in itself. Usually, a guest artist means unwelcome shoddiness. Not here. Khan Michael has an affinity for Vampirella, capturing her distinctive look while displaying her savagery toward monsters."

THE BOYS: BUTCHER, BAKER, CANDLESTICKMAKER #4
(COMICBOOKRESOURCES.COM): "There's a sense of dread throughout the issue that grows as you read and just smacks you in the face. Ennis is a master of this technique and, with Robertson, pulls it off expertly here. You know what's going to happen and it's worse than you think you know."

DYNAMITE
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Garth Ennis Russ Braun Darick Robertson
The BOYS
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The BOYS™

SIXTY-TWO

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in The Boys.

Story by:
GARTH ENNIS

Colors by:
TONY AVIÑA

Art by:
RUSS BRAUN

Cover by:
DARICK ROBERTSON

Letters by:
SIMON BOWLAND

The Boys Created By:
ENNIS & ROBERTSON

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OVER THE HILL WITH THE SWORDS OF A THOUSAND MEN

part three

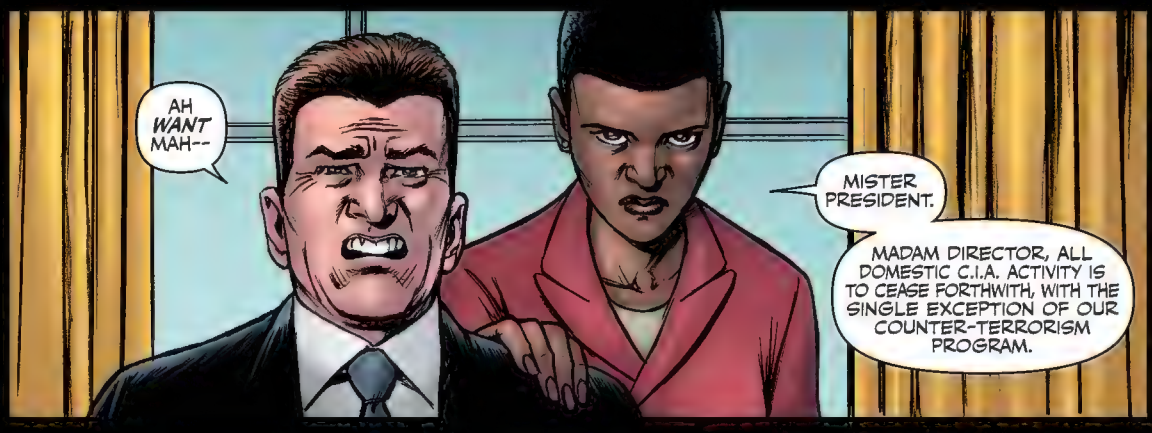
FOR FUCK'S SAKE, I WANNA WORD WITH ONE OF 'EM! I WANNA KNOW WHO--
BLOODY HELL...!
YOU DID NOT SPECIFY, M'SIEU CHARCUTER.
WELL I THOUGHT IT WAS A BIT BLEEDIN' OBVIOUS, DIDN'T I?
BESIDES, YOU ARE--HOW YOU SAY--ONE TO TALK, N'EST-CE PAS?

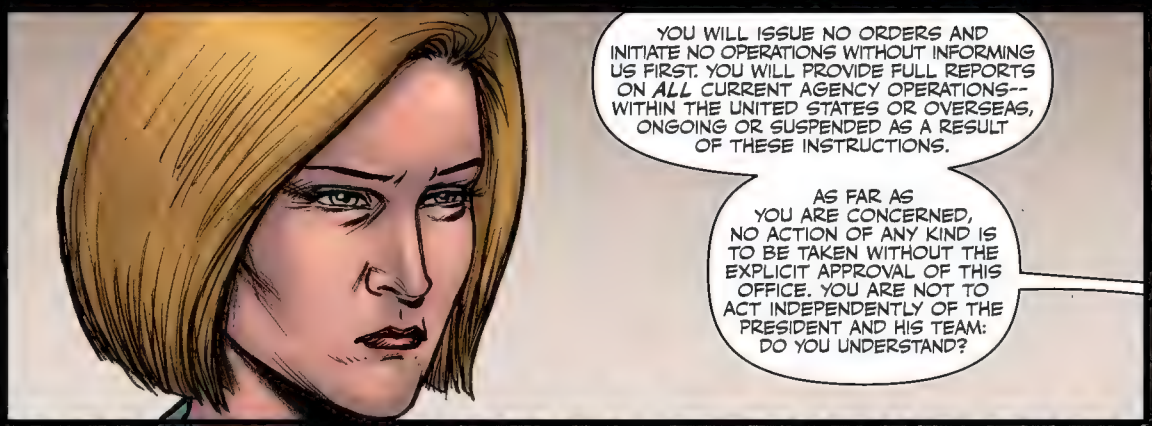
FUCK ME RIGID. DO I HAVE TO THINK OF EVERYTHING NOW?
WELL, THEY ARE PARALACTIC, LES "SIX MILLION DOLLAR HEROES". PEUT-ETRE WE CAN WIRE ONE TO A LAPTOP, AND DOWNLOAD HIS--
OH, ACT YER AGE, FRENCHIE! YOU MAY AS WELL GO HOME AN' GET YER FUCKIN' OUIJA BOARD!
WIRE ONE TO A LAPTOP, HE SAYS! JESUS!
UH...I THINK THIS FELLA OVER HERE'S STILL BREATHIN'.
MAYBE...
NICE ONE, HUGHIE.
GLAD TO SEE SOMEONE STILL KNOWS WHAT THEY'RE DOIN'.

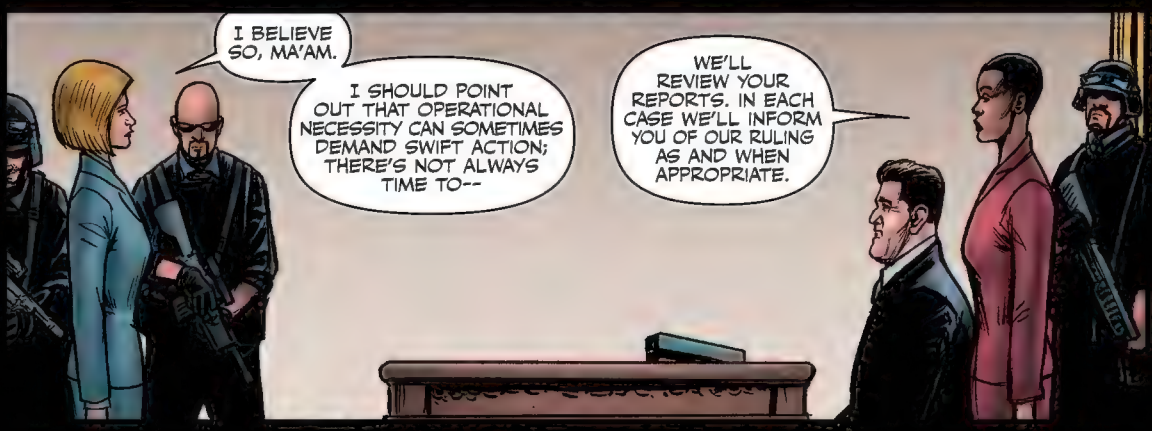
DIRECTOR RAYNER. WELCOME TO THE WHITE HOUSE.

THANK YOU, MA'AM. I'VE ACTUALLY BEEN HERE BEFORE ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS.
HAVE YOU?

MISTER PRESIDENT, PLEASE ACCEPT MY CONDOLENCES FOR THE DEATH OF PRESIDENT SCHAEFER. HE WAS A GOOD MAN AND A GREAT LEADER.
I WAS FORTUNATE TO ENJOY AN EXCELLENT WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS OFFICE; I VERY MUCH HOPE THE SAME WILL BE TRUE OF YOURS.


AH WANT MAH--
MISTER PRESIDENT.
MADAM DIRECTOR, ALL DOMESTIC C.I.A. ACTIVITY IS TO CEASE FORTHWITH, WITH THE SINGLE EXCEPTION OF OUR COUNTER-TERRORISM PROGRAM.


YOU WILL ISSUE NO ORDERS AND INITIATE NO OPERATIONS WITHOUT INFORMING US FIRST. YOU WILL PROVIDE FULL REPORTS ON ALL CURRENT AGENCY OPERATIONS--WITHIN THE UNITED STATES OR OVERSEAS, ONGOING OR SUSPENDED AS A RESULT OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS.
AS FAR AS YOU ARE CONCERNED, NO ACTION OF ANY KIND IS TO BE TAKEN WITHOUT THE EXPLICIT APPROVAL OF THIS OFFICE. YOU ARE NOT TO ACT INDEPENDENTLY OF THE PRESIDENT AND HIS TEAM: DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

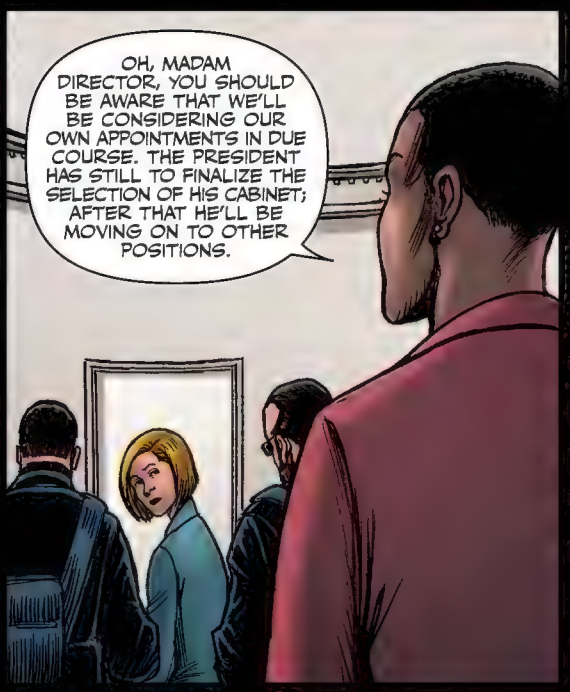

I BELIEVE SO, MA'AM.
I SHOULD POINT OUT THAT OPERATIONAL NECESSITY CAN SOMETIMES DEMAND SWIFT ACTION; THERE'S NOT ALWAYS TIME TO--
WE'LL REVIEW YOUR REPORTS. IN EACH CASE WE'LL INFORM YOU OF OUR RULING AS AND WHEN APPROPRIATE.

WHAT I MEAN IS...IT'S NOT ALWAYS PRACTICAL TO SUBMIT...
WE'LL WORK TOGETHER WITH YOUR OFFICE TO ACHIEVE THE BEST SOLUTION.

I SEE.
THANK YOU.

IF THERE'S NOTHING ELSE, MA'AM, MISTER PRESIDENT--I'LL FIND MY OWN WAY OUT.
NO.

I KNOW THE--
OH.


OH, MADAM DIRECTOR, YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT WE'LL BE CONSIDERING OUR OWN APPOINTMENTS IN DUE COURSE. THE PRESIDENT HAS STILL TO FINALIZE THE SELECTION OF HIS CABINET; AFTER THAT HE'LL BE MOVING ON TO OTHER POSITIONS.

MIGHT BE TIME YOU MADE THAT CALL TO THE D.N.C..

AKKK
KZZT
NEEEEEEB
COME ON, WANKER...
STOP PISSIN' ABOUT. WE KNOW YOU'RE JUST A BLOKE, YOU AIN'T HAVIN' A BLOODY COMPUTER MALFUNCTION.
GAKA
DORP
ALL RIGHT, PLAY IT YOUR WAY. FRENCHIE?
OHHHH DEAR, BRACHIAL ARTERY. LOOK AT ALL THAT CYBER-CLARET.
DUDE...!
FRENCHIE.
RIGHT THEN. TO WHAT DO WE OWE THE FUCKIN' PLEASURE?

WHA...?
WHO SENT YOU, YOU DOZY BASTARD...
VOUGHT-AMERICAN.

GUY FROM VOUGHT.
SAID YOU GOTTA GO.

OH JESUS, IS THIS IT--?
THESE ASSHOLES'RE ALL WE RATE? I MEAN I GET PAYBACK, BUT...
YEAH.
UNLESS THEY'RE SAVIN' THE BIG BOYS FOR SOMETHIN' ELSE.

SO THIS VOUGHT GUY, WHERE'D HE--
SHIT!

MY SELF-DESTRUCT! YOU'VE TRIGGERED MY SELF-DESTRUCT!

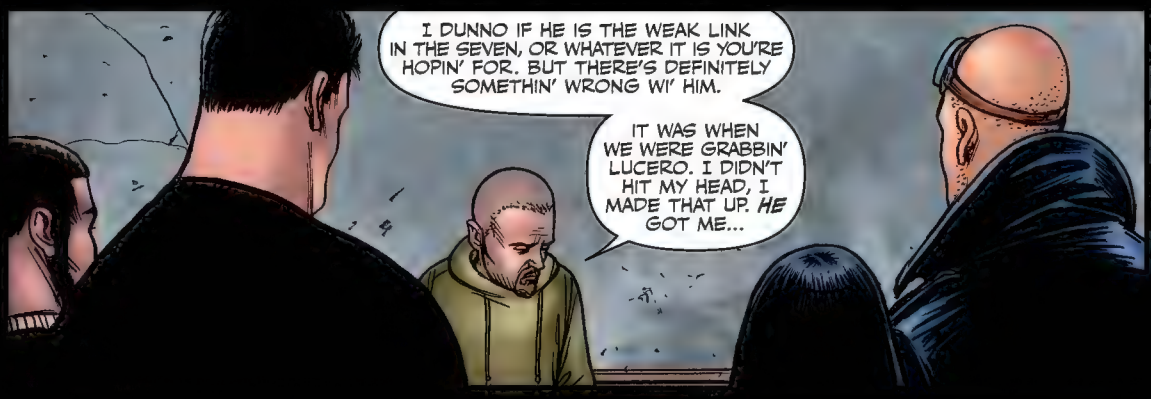
YOU GOTTA HELP ME! YOU GOTTA DISARM IT!
YOU'RE ON YER OWN WITH THAT ONE, SON!

SACRE BLEU...!
AW, JESUS, I THINK IT'S GONE RIGHT THROUGH!

CALL THE P.D. AN' GET 'EM TO GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS. HUGHIE, YOU NIP DOWNSTAIRS AN' TELL 'EM SOMETHIN' TO CALM 'EM DOWN.
SHOULD I SAY IT WAS LIKE A TERRORIST ATTACK...?

OH.
NO.

YEAH, I KNOW. I KNOW I WAS. WHAT CAN I SAY, IT'S A BAD HABIT O' MINE.
NOW, YOU CAN EITHER HANG UP AN' CARRY ON TAKIN' THE HUMP, OR YOU CAN GET ONTO THAT PONCE AT VICTORY AN' FIND OUT TODAY'S PASSWORD. AN' MAYBE, JUST MAYBE, WE CAN NIP THINGS IN THE BUD BEFORE THEY GET ANY WORSE.
YOU WHAT?
WELL BOB'S DEAD, VIC'S IN, THE HOMELANDER'S TALKIN' WORLD WAR THREE AN' VOUGHT JUST TRIED TO DO THE LOT OF US. IF THIS AIN'T IT, I DUNNO WHAT WOULD BE.
ALL RIGHT. CHEERS.
HE SAYS ABOUT TEN MINUTES.
RIGHT.
FRENCHIE, I WANT THE TWO O' YOU TO--
IF THIS REALLY IS WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE, THERE'S A COUPLE O' THINGS I SHOULD TELL YOU ABOUT.
NOT NOW, HUGHIE...
THE FIRST IS WHAT BLACK NOIR DID TO ME AT HEROGASM.

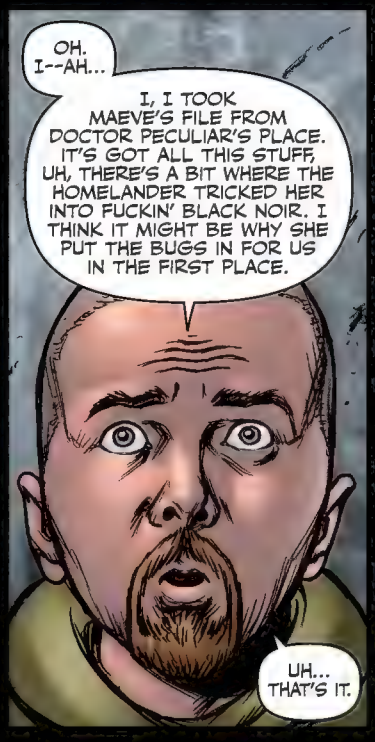

I DUNNO IF HE IS THE WEAK LINK IN THE SEVEN, OR WHATEVER IT IS YOU'RE HOPIN' FOR. BUT THERE'S DEFINITELY SOMETHIN' WRONG WI' HIM.
IT WAS WHEN WE WERE GRABBIN' LUCERO. I DIDN'T HIT MY HEAD, I MADE THAT UP. HE GOT ME...

AN' HE...
HE...
HE STUCK HIS THUMB UP MY ARSE.

HE WHAT--?
HE SAID GOOD SOLDIER, GOOD SOLDIER. AN' THEN HE SHOWED IT TO ME AN'--HE STUCK IT UP THERE.
HE TOLD NO ONE? NO, HE COULD NOT HAVE, WE WERE NOT DISCOVERED...

MENTAL FUCKIN' BASTARD.
WHAT'S THE OTHER THING?

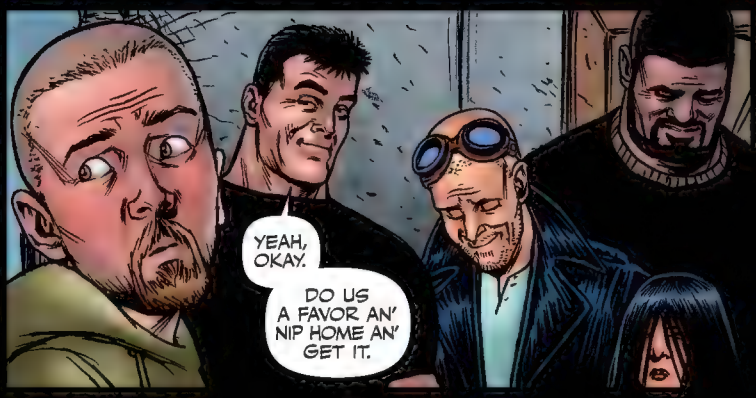
EH?
YOU SAID THERE WAS TWO THINGS.


OH. I--AH...
I, I TOOK MAEVE'S FILE FROM DOCTOR PECULIAR'S PLACE. IT'S GOT ALL THIS STUFF, UH, THERE'S A BIT WHERE THE HOMELANDER TRICKED HER INTO FUCKIN' BLACK NOIR. I THINK IT MIGHT BE WHY SHE PUT THE BUGS IN FOR US IN THE FIRST PLACE.
UH... THAT'S IT.

HMH.

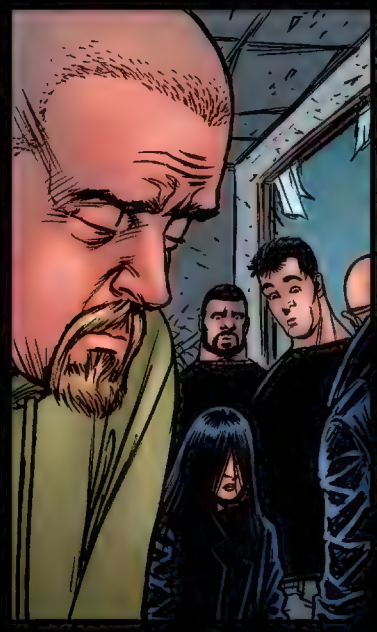
WHAT'D YOU NICK THE FILE FOR?

EH--?
THE FILE?
OH--I-- I WAS GONNA INVESTIGATE--
YOU WEREN'T HOPIN' FOR A SET O' THEM PHOTOS O' HER, LIKE THE ONES I'VE GOT IN ME DESK?


YEAH, OKAY.
DO US A FAVOR AN' NIP HOME AN' GET IT.

YOU KNOW... I DON'T WANNA RISK THE WRATH O' HUGHIE DESCENDIN' ON ME AGAIN...
BUT YOU DO REALISE THAT IF THIS *IS* WHAT SAVES THE DAY, IT'LL BE 'COS YOU WAS AFTER THEM PICTURES FOR A WANK?

HA!!

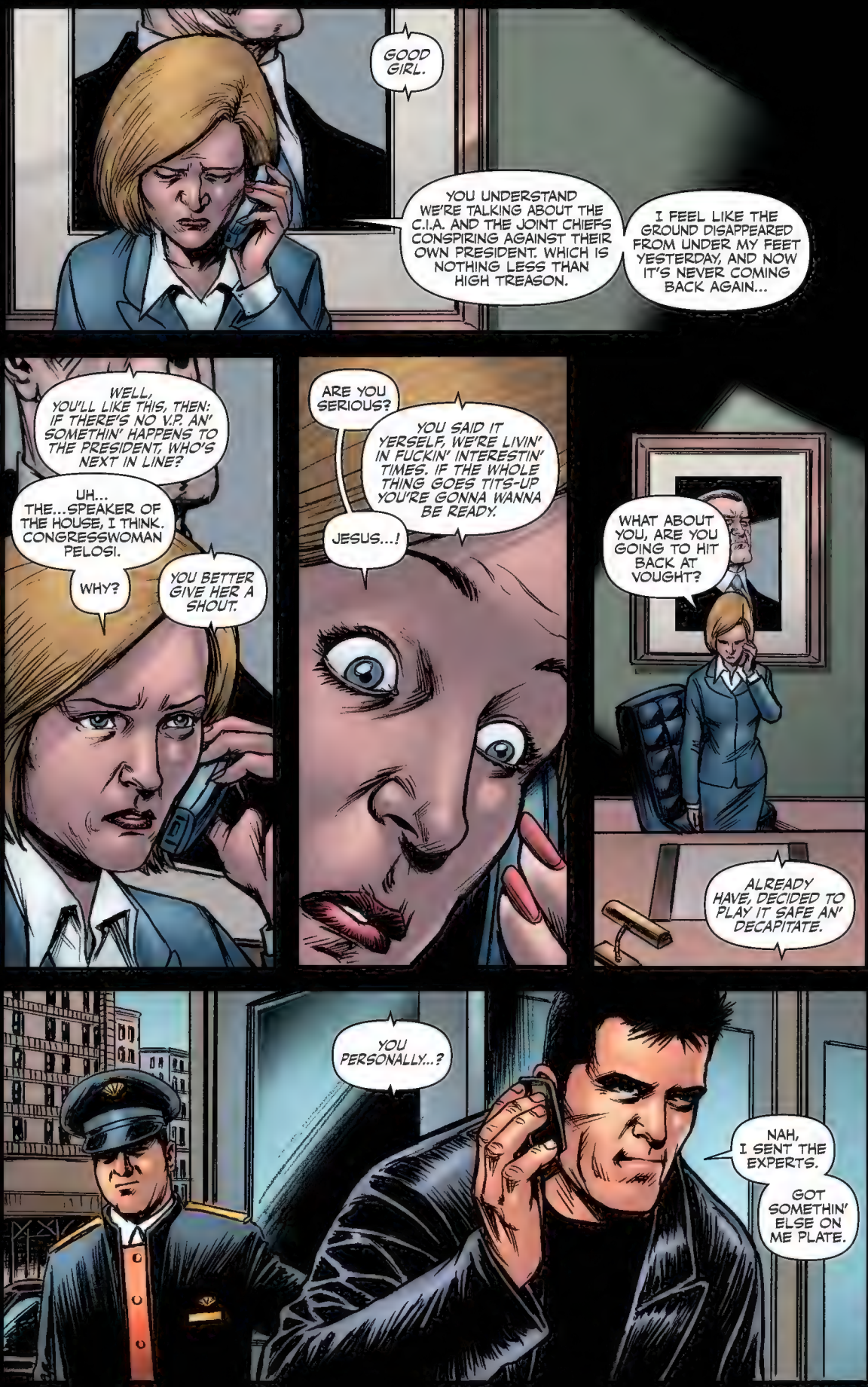


...SOME VOUGHT ATTACK-BITCH, I'VE NEVER SEEN HER BEFORE. SHE NEVER EVEN MENTIONED YOU.
NO?
NOT SPECIFICALLY. IT WAS A BLANKET ORDER, ALL OPERATIONS, RIGHT ACROSS THE BOARD.

THIS COULD JUST MEAN THEY'RE AS NERVOUS AS WE ARE. THEY DON'T WANT TO IMMEDIATELY PISS YOU OFF, NOT WITH WHAT YOU'VE GOT ON THEIR SUPES.
I MEAN GOD KNOWS, I WAS A GOOD LITTLE GIRL: I WASN'T LOOKING TO GIVE ANYONE AN EXCUSE FOR ANYTHING...
YEAH, I THOUGHT ABOUT THAT.

LEAVE US HANGIN', WONDERIN' WHEN THE AXE'LL FALL. BUT IT DON'T MAKE SENSE IF THEY'VE ALREADY SENT PARALACTIC AFTER US...
AREN'T THEY KIND OF A JOKE?
THEY WERE.

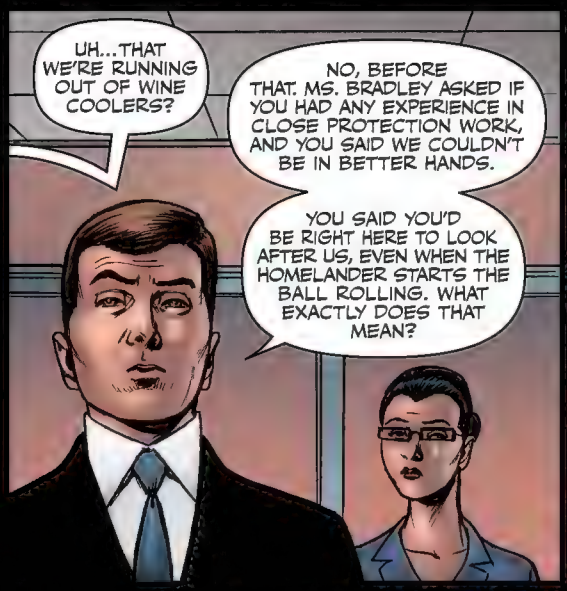
SO EITHER VOUGHT THINK WE'RE ONE TOO, OR THEY'RE HOLDIN' BACK THE SEVEN AN' SO ON FOR SOMETHIN' FUCKIN' HORRIBLE. YOU WANNA CHEER ME UP AN' TELL ME YOU GAVE THAT FILE TO THE AIR FORCE?
I GAVE THE GODDAMN THING TO NORAD.
THE


GOOD GIRL.
YOU UNDERSTAND WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE C.I.A. AND THE JOINT CHIEFS CONSPIRING AGAINST THEIR OWN PRESIDENT. WHICH IS NOTHING LESS THAN HIGH TREASON.
I FEEL LIKE THE GROUND DISAPPEARED FROM UNDER MY FEET YESTERDAY, AND NOW IT'S NEVER COMING BACK AGAIN...
WELL, YOU'LL LIKE THIS, THEN: IF THERE'S NO V.P. AN' SOMETHIN' HAPPENS TO THE PRESIDENT, WHO'S NEXT IN LINE?
UH... THE...SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE, I THINK. CONGRESSWOMAN PELOSI.
WHY?
YOU BETTER GIVE HER A SHOUT.
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
YOU SAID IT YERSELF, WE'RE LIVIN' IN FUCKIN' INTERESTIN' TIMES. IF THE WHOLE THING GOES TITS-UP YOU'RE GONNA WANNA BE READY.
JESUS...!
WHAT ABOUT YOU, ARE YOU GOING TO HIT BACK AT VOUGHT?
ALREADY HAVE, DECIDED TO PLAY IT SAFE AN' DECAPITATE.
YOU PERSONALLY...?
NAH, I SENT THE EXPERTS.
GOT SOMETHIN' ELSE ON ME PLATE.

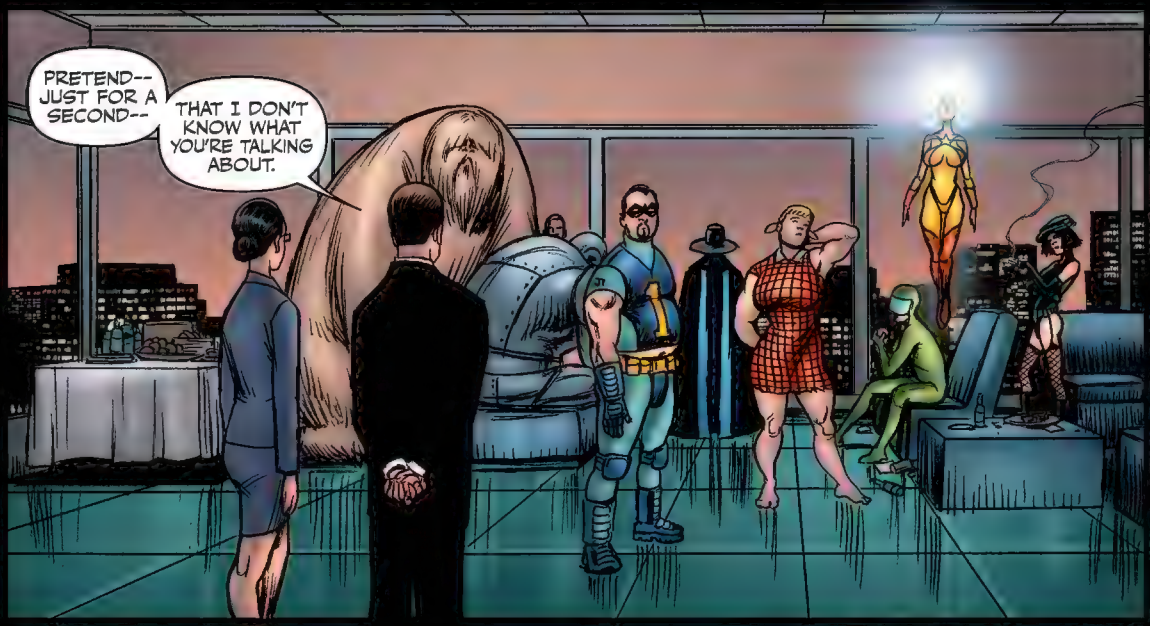
ART.
WHO CAN TRULY DEFINE IT?

ALLEZ VITE!

WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?


UH...THAT WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF WINE COOLERS?
NO, BEFORE THAT. MS. BRADLEY ASKED IF YOU HAD ANY EXPERIENCE IN CLOSE PROTECTION WORK, AND YOU SAID WE COULDN'T BE IN BETTER HANDS.
YOU SAID YOU'D BE RIGHT HERE TO LOOK AFTER US, EVEN WHEN THE HOMELANDER STARTS THE BALL ROLLING. WHAT EXACTLY DOES THAT MEAN?

WELL--I MEAN--WHEN THE PLAN STARTS, WHEN IT GOES INTO EFFECT. I MEAN THAT'S WHY YOU BROUGHT US HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE, RIGHT?
SMART PLAY, SUGAR. YOU UP TO SOME SERIOUS SHIT.
J1


PRETEND--JUST FOR A SECOND--
THAT I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.

C'EST BINGO.
REMEMBER THE WORDS OF M'SIEU CHARCUTER:

"AS ME OLD SERGEANT-MAJOR USED TO SAY--GET IN, BANJO THE BASTARDS, AND FUCK OFF OUT OF IT."

HAAAAAIIIIIEEEEEE!!!
...MERDE.

NO, THE PAGES AREN'T FUCKIN' STUCK TOGETHER...!
JUST ASKIN'.
HA BLOODY HA.
OH, THERE YOU ARE, HUGHIE. C'MON UP TO THE ROOF, I'VE GOT SOMETHIN' I WANNA SHOW YOU.
YOU ALL RIGHT?
NO.
I BASICALLY JUST TOLD EVERYONE I GOT VIOLATED. IT WASN'T EASY FOR ME TO SAY, IT'S BEEN HANGIN' OVER ME FOR MONTHS.
BUT NOBODY GIVES A SHIT, IT'S JUST FUCK HUGHIE AN' ON TO THE NEXT ORDER O' BUSINESS.
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
I MEAN I'D LOVE TO TELL YOU IF THINGS WEREN'T SO FUCKED WE'D ALL GIVE YOU A BIG HUG, AN' HAVE A NICE ENCOUNTER GROUP SO YOU COULD SHARE YER PAIN. BUT I DUNNO IF YOU'VE NOTICED, HUGHIE, THAT AIN'T EXACTLY THE WAY THE BOYS GET ON...
AYE.

NEVER MIND. MAYBE THIS'LL CHEER YOU UP.
WHAT WILL?
YOU'LL SEE.
A

ARE THINGS REALLY AS BAD AS YOU WERE SAYIN', AYE?
STAIRWAY A ROOF ACCESS
THEY'RE ON A FUCKIN' KNIFE-EDGE, MATE. THAT'S WHY YOU'VE GOTTA SORT YERSELF OUT, PRONTO.

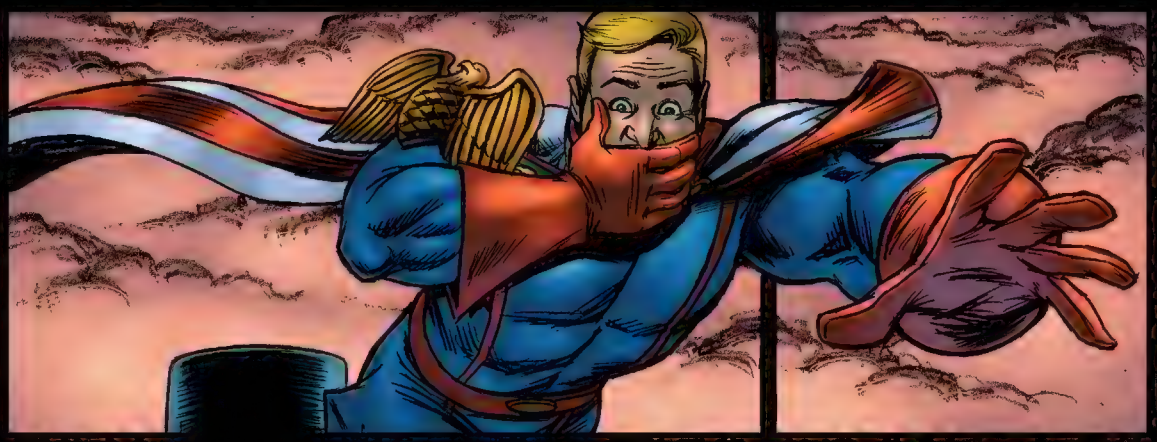
YOU TOLD ME YOU AIN'T HAVIN' NOTHIN' TO DO WITH THE ROUGH STUFF NO MORE. AN' FROM WHAT I SAW O' YER MEDAL-WINNIN' PERFORMANCE UNDER THE DESK THERE, YOU MEANT IT.
WELL, I AIN'T GONNA ARGUE WITH YOU. I TRIED THAT.

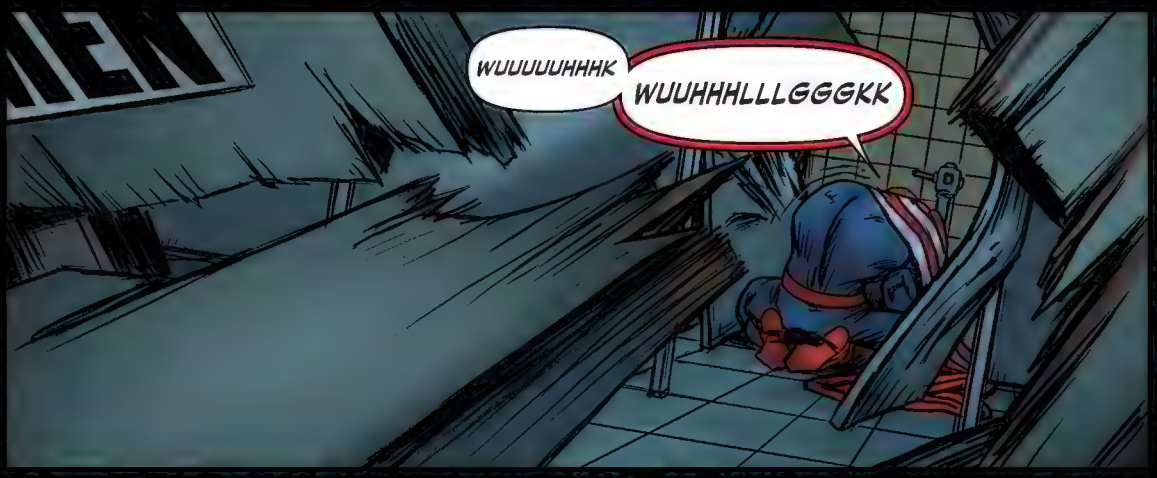
I AIN'T GONNA SAY NOTHIN', REALLY.
WHAT THE FUCK--?

EXCEPT THAT IF *THIS* DON'T WORK--

THEN I BLEEDIN' WELL GIVE UP.

YOU HEARD ME. JUST SPREAD THE WORD, THEY ALL KNOW WHAT TO DO.
I'LL SEE YOU IN D.C..
HMH.
TOMORROW...
THE SUN RISES ON A DIFFERENT WORLD.





next: A LADY OF A CERTAIN AGE

DYNAMITE DISPATCHES

Hey, Dynamite fans! Have any questions or suggestions? Email: LETTERS@DYNAMITE.NET

NEXT ISSUE:

Everything comes to a head at once as Frenchie and the Female take on Team Titanic, Maeve and Annie have a heart to heart and Hughie comes face to face with the reason he joined the Boys in the first place. Vought-American are suddenly ready to parley, but with the White House in new hands and the Homelander's plans finally kicking in, is Butcher in any mood to listen?

ASK DYNAMITE:

ASK DYNAMITE: Send letters to:
letters@dynamite.net
and mark them "ok to print"!

This week, we're gonna let a sampling of the letters about DARK SHADOWS #1 do the talking for us...

GREG WRITES: I want to thank you for reviving dark shadows. I just read the first issue and it was great. Please I beg of you do not let this comic series end to soon please keep it going for 50 issues 100 issues just keep making it please. Again thank you for dark shadows and bringing Barnabas Collins back.

JOHN WRITES: I have had my copy of Dark Shadows #1 for a few days now and have been rereading it and am looking forward to the next issue. I am a Dark Shadows fan from the very first TV Season in 1966 when it was on ABC TV so I know my Dark Shadows and this is good Dark Shadows. It is well written and it is well done. It stands on its own and if it attracts any fans who are not familiar with the original series they will not have any trouble catching on to the story line and getting caught up in the main attraction of Dark Shadows: Barnabas Collins! Everything about this comic is impressive from the artwork to the storyline. I like the way that the characters look the way that they are supposed to look and Collinwood and the Old House look the way that they are supposed to look. So thank you for this first effort. I look forward to Dark Shadows #2!

BRAD WRITES: WOW! Dark Shadows #1 was just awesome! The characterizations by Stuart Manning are perfect and the art by Aaron Campbell is spot-on! The characters and settings look just like the TV show! I've been a fan of the original 60's soap opera for over 20 years and I never thought the original storylines would ever continue. Now thanks to you they have and hopefully will continue for years to come. I'm buying 2 copies of each issue to support this series. Thank you to Stuart, Aaron and everyone at Dynamite for bringing this much loved series back to life!

RICHARD WRITES: Just finished reading the first issue of the new "Dark Shadows" and I was very impressed. It was vastly superior to those Gold Key DS comic books and certainly better than the short-lived Innovation DS comics which came out in '90s, which were loosely based on the 1991 NBC revival series. I'm very glad you set your DS story in 1971, shortly after Barnabas, Dr. Hoffman and Professor Stokes returned from their time trip to 1840. Anyway, I'm glad to see you're continuing this Dark Shadows series with a connection to the original story-line. Hope to see some other original characters, like the beloved Professor Stokes. I also hope and pray to see a return of my favorite DS villain - the diabolical Count Andreas Petofi from the 1897 storyline.

MIKEY PLAGUE WRITES: Just wanted to let you guys at Dynamite know that I really enjoyed the first issue of Dark Shadows. Good art and story, and heavy on the suspense, can't wait to see what happens in the next issue! I am a long time DS fan, and really like being reunited with all the original characters I remember from the show. Keep up the great work, hope to be with you for many issues to come. Fangs n best witches!

DYNAMITE IN THE NEWS:

DYNAMITE ON TWITTER!
We're putting in a renewed effort to get the Dynamite word out hour by hour via Twitter, check it:
twitter.com/DynamiteComics
Thanks to everyone who's followed us in the last couple of weeks, let's keep it going!

SPINNING OFF FROM GARTH ENNIS' JENNIFER BLOOD... THE NINJETTES!

Spinning off from the hit series Jennifer Blood, by acclaimed writer Garth (The Boys) Ennis, comes The Ninjettes! The Ninjettes #1 is written by incoming Jennifer Blood writer Al Ewing (picked by Garth to take over the series), drawn by Eman Casallos, with covers by Admira Wijaya and Johnny Desjardins! But who are the new Ninjettes? How did they come to be dead and/or decapitated? And what kind of brutal insanity is their passing about to unleash? Find out the grim connection between college student Kelly Hara and the ice-cold engine of death known as Varla as the origin of the Ninjettes is revealed! Don't miss this ultra-violent odyssey of sin, scandal, brutality and branding coming next February with The Ninjettes #1!

"Ninjettes is where I get to look at some of the classic exploitation tropes," says writer Al Ewing. "Hopefully I will twist them into something that appeals to a broad spectrum of readers, while remaining a rich, raw, red slab of bleeding meat torn straight from the mooing flank of pop culture, given a gun and told to go out and kill! Kill! KILL!"

"Al Ewing is poised to take the American comics market by storm, adds Dynamite Editor Joe Rybandt. "A quiet madman, hiding in plain sight, writing inventive, dark comics fiction. This is the next logical step for the fan-favorite Ninjettes and you won't want to miss out."
"I am so proud of Jennifer Blood's success (and gore)," states Dynamite Entertainment President and Publisher Nick Barrucci. "I am extremely excited to have Al on board, and for The Ninjettes and Jennifer Blood being his first writing assignments in the United States! Look for Al's star to rise in the near future!"

Al Ewing began his career writing stories in the five-page Future Shocks format for 2000AD. Recent work includes Damnation Station and Zombo, illustrated by Henry Flint, which was collected in trade paperback in 2010. He has also contributed to Solar Wind, FutureQuake, The End Is Nigh. Al is responsible for the diary of Ralph Dibny and the mobile comic Murderdrome with P. J. Holden. Current comics projects include regular stints on Judge Dredd and an upcoming six-issue arc on Jennifer Blood, a comic published by Dynamite Entertainment. Al's debut novel was published in 2007 by Abaddon Books.Pax Britannia: El Sombra features a mysterious Mexican hero fighting back against the menace of steam-powered Nazis. It is set in the same Steampunk alternate history as the other novels from the Pax Britannia series. Three other novels have been published since, with a fourth on the way.

Join the conversation on Twitter with #TheNinjettes

DYNAMITE REVIEWS

KIRBY: GENESIS–SILVER STAR #1
(AINTITCOOL.COM): "It's refreshing to see a comic like this. It's reminiscent of Kirby's heyday when imaginations ran wild and the limits were only found when you ran out of ink in your pen. SILVER STAR captures the wonder of an old school Kirby comic and honors the creators' characters."

DARK SHADOWS #1
(COMICBOOKRESOURCES.COM): "Dark Shadows fans, your time is now and your vampire is back. Other vampiric comic fans might want to give this a peek too."

DARK SHADOWS #1
(COMICVINE.COM): "Dark Shadows has had a long life on television and in past attempts at comic adaptations. With a new series and new movie in the works, now is the perfect time to discover what this franchise is all about. The first issue is set up nicely so that it is not required to know anything about the show. The opening pages doe a fine job in describing who the main characters are and what we need to know about them at this point. The characters do have their share of secrets so that adds to the element of the story for readers that have never watched the show. Aaron Campbell's art along with colors by Carlos Lopez further brings home the fact that this is a story from an older period of time. You can really see the vibe Stuart Manning is setting up with his story. Because it's a first issue, there is some set up involved and the action might be a little on the light side. There is more than enough here, along with the cliffhanger ending, to give me a reason to want to come back for the next issue."

DARK SHADOWS #1
(GEEKSOFDOOM.COM): "Fan of the property or not, you will be pleasantly surprised by this comic. It's a great looking book with a great story. In this day of over the top flesh-eating zombies, it's very refreshing to see a horror comic that is scary due to actual suspense and not over the top gore."

THE BOYS #60
(COMICVINE.COM): "This issue was great because it illustrated a transition between two very important storylines: the death of a member of The Boys and the rise of a new president. In true Ennis fashion, it teased is with a rich, deep plot and then ripped it away with a madcap, out-of-the-blue sequence."

WARLORD OF MARS #12
(SCOOP.DIAMONDGALLERIES.COM) : "Warlord of Mars continues to be an entertaining series that captures the spirit of the Edgar Rice Burroughs novels as it explores the perils and pitfalls of Martian existence. The first of a new three-part story, this one continues the page-turning action and intrigue. By the way, being a Dynamite title, it's no surprise that there have been plenty of variant covers on this series – and many of them have been very good, but we really have to offer a shout out to Joe Jusko, who has really captured the essence of what John Carter, Dejah Thoris, the other characters and their world are all about."

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The BOYS

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The BOYS™

SIXTY-THREE

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in The Boys.

Story by:
GARTH ENNIS

Colors by:
TONY AVIÑA

Art by:
RUSS BRAUN

Cover by:
DARICK ROBERTSON

Letters by:
SIMON BOWLAND

The Boys Created By:
ENNIS & ROBERTSON

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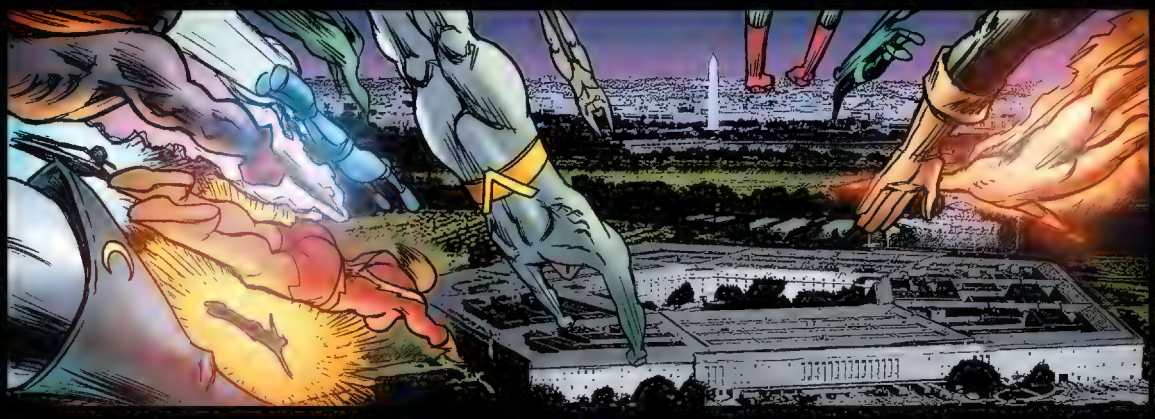
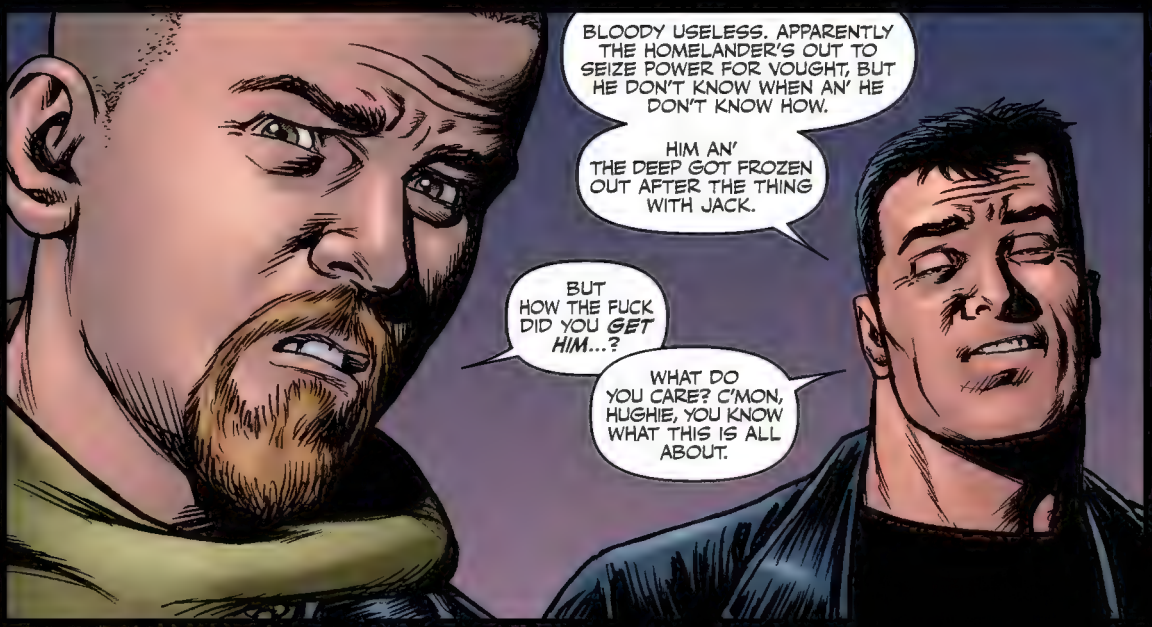


OVER THE HILL WITH THE SWORDS OF A THOUSAND MEN

part four

WHAT'S...
IS THIS FOR...
ARE WE GONNA LIKE INTERROGATE HIM, OR SOMETHIN'--?
ALREADY DONE THAT.


BLOODY USELESS. APPARENTLY THE HOMELANDER'S OUT TO SEIZE POWER FOR VOUGHT, BUT HE DON'T KNOW WHEN AN' HE DON'T KNOW HOW.
HIM AN' THE DEEP GOT FROZEN OUT AFTER THE THING WITH JACK.
BUT HOW THE FUCK DID YOU *GET HIM*...?
WHAT DO YOU CARE? C'MON, HUGHIE, YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT.

HERE, I TOLD YOU I'D LET YOU LISTEN TO THIS.
FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT. BUT HERE YOU GO.
HEY, HERE HE IS. SO HOW WAS SCOTLAND?

HELLO?
DUDE, YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE SEEN A GHOST, WHAT'S UP?
I, UH...I THINK I FUCKED UP.
I KIND OF KILLED SOME CHICK.

I MEAN I DIDN'T MEAN TO, I JUST FUCKING RAN INTO THE GUY AND SENT HIM FLYING. I'VE NEVER DONE ANYTHING LIKE IT BEFORE, IT WAS SO MUCH EASIER THAN I EXPECTED.
SO?
SO HE SLAMMED INTO THIS GIRL I'M TALKING ABOUT AND CRUSHED HER AGAINST A WALL.

AND WHAT DID YOU DO THEN?
OH, HOMELANDER, A-TRAIN'S GOT A KIND OF A... WELL...
I HEARD. WHAT DID YOU DO?
I--WELL. I GOT THE FUCK OUT OF THERE MY KIND OF FAST.

THEN YOU WIN A COOKIE. THAT WAS EXACTLY WHAT YOU SHOULD HAVE DONE.
UH...YEAH. YEAH, THAT'S WHAT I FIGURED.
REALLY IT'S VOUGHT'S FAULT, EXPECTING US TO CLEAN UP THEIR MESS. SOME C-LISTER GOES OFF THE RAILS AND THEY THINK THERE WON'T BE ANY COLLATERAL?

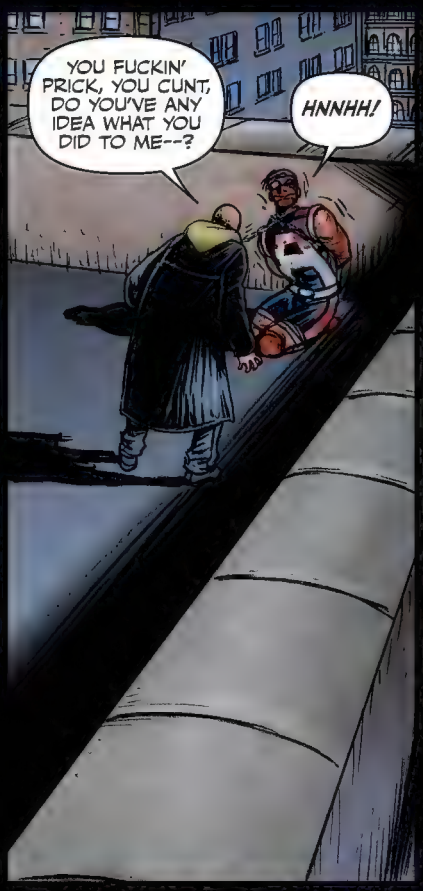
HE'S RIGHT, DUDE. IT HAPPENS A LOT MORE THAN YOU'D THINK, I MEAN YOU USE POWERS LIKE OURS IN THE REAL WORLD--WELL, YOU'VE GOTTA EXPECT A FEW CIVILIANS DOING THE WHIRLY-SPLAT.
HEH. REALLY?
SHIT, YEAH. I MEAN YOU WON'T FIND THIS IN THE ARCHIVE EDITIONS, BUT MY MAN BLACK NOIR OVER THERE ONCE TOOK OUT A SCHOOL BUS.

COMPARED TO HIM YOU'RE A FUCKING VIRGIN, DUDE...
HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH...!

VINCENT CASSELL! VINCENT CASSELL!
WHAT THE FUCK--
WHO--?
TAE TIHS DNA EID!
OH MY GOD, BUTCHER'S GOING FOR IT--!
I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THAT. BUT WE HAVE TO LEAVE.

FOR FUCK'S SAKE AIM, YOU--!
HUNNHH!!
FUCKIN' PRICK, YOU--
SALLE BOCHE!
YA WANT GUM?
THERE! THERE! FIRE!

TURN IT OFF.
LISTEN, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT SHIT. CHECK THIS OUT, WE'VE GOT THE CANDIDATES--
TURN IT THE FUCK OFF.


YOU FUCKIN' PRICK, YOU CUNT, DO YOU'VE ANY IDEA WHAT YOU DID TO ME--?
HNNHH!

DO YOU? DO YOU, YOU BASTARD? DO YOU?!
GUHHK--!

YOU KILLED HER, YOU STUPID SHITE! YOU DIDN'T GIVE A FUCK, BUT SHE WAS EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD TO ME!
SHE LOVED ME, AN' I LOVED HER, AN' EVERYTHING WAS GOIN' RIGHT AN' IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR YOU NONE O' THIS WOULD'VE EVEN HAPPENED...!

HER NAME WAS ROBIN--
DUDE, I DON'T WANNA FUCKING DIE...!

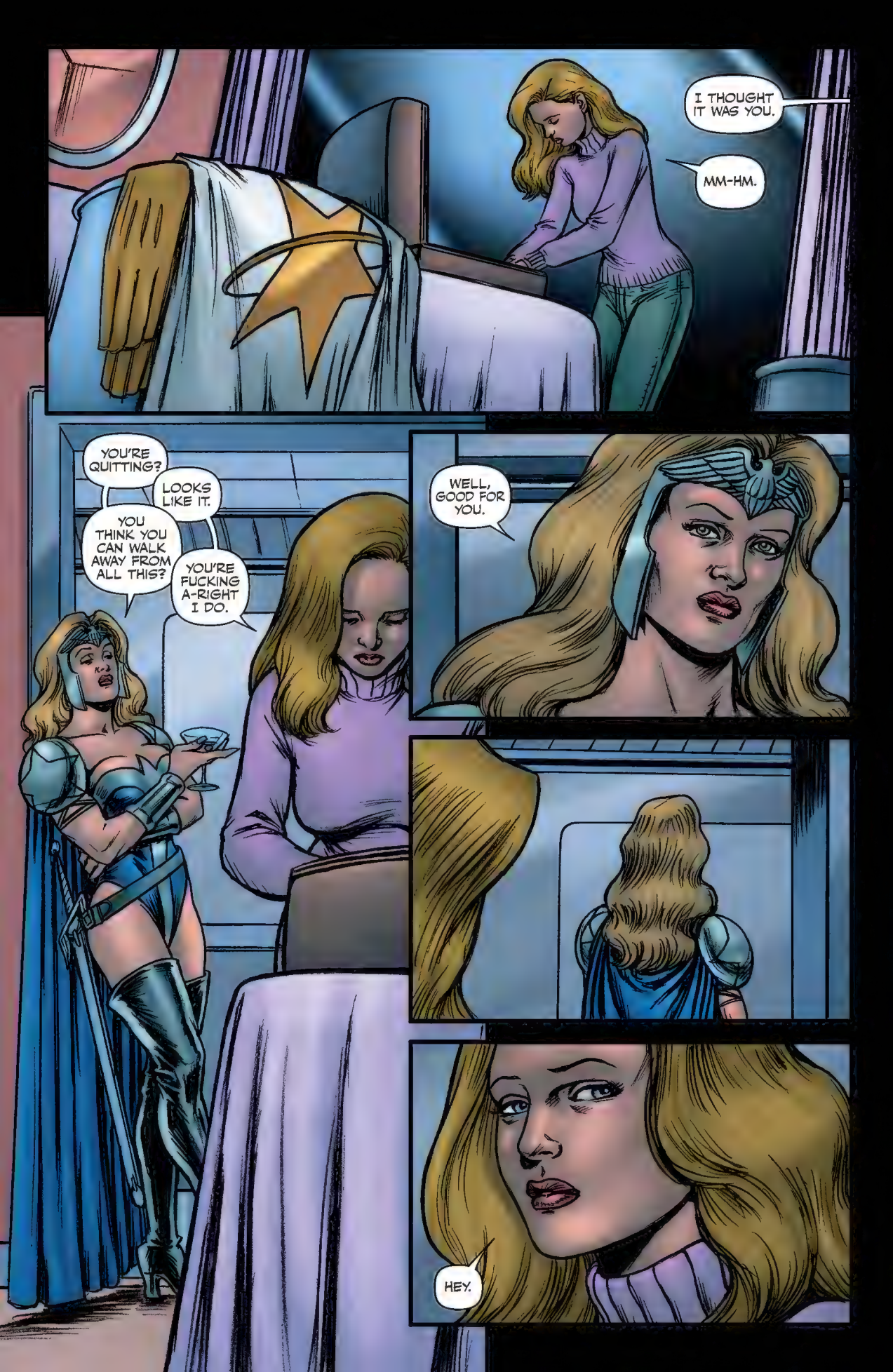
I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY FOR WHATEVER I DID, I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU FUCKING WANT!
SHUT UP!
JUST DON'T KILL ME! DON'T FUCKING KILL ME, OKAY? PLEASE!
SHUT UP, YOU PRICK, I'M TRYNNA TELL YOU ABOUT HER!

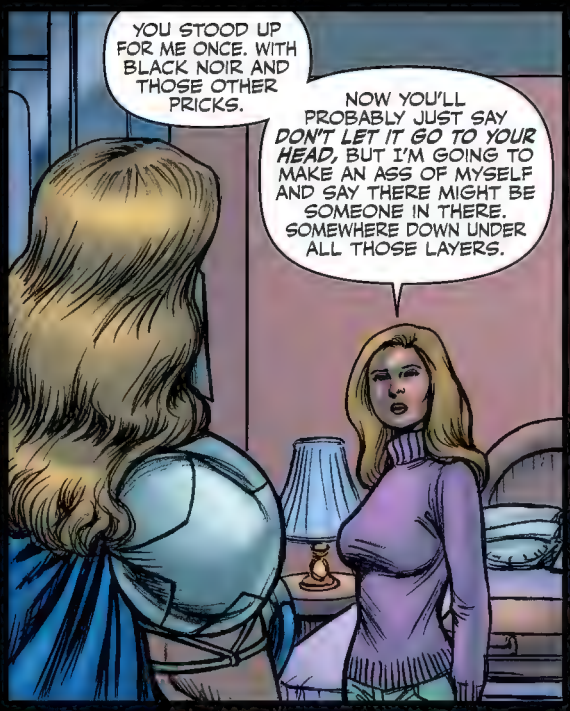
SHE WAS A REAL PERSON. A HUMAN BEING.
PLEASE, I'M SORREEEEEE--!

SHUT UP, I SAID! SHE--
NO-NO-NO, DON'T KILL ME! NO-NO-NO-NOOOOO...!
YOU STUPID CUNT, SHUT UP! SHUT--
NNAAAAAAAAHHHHH

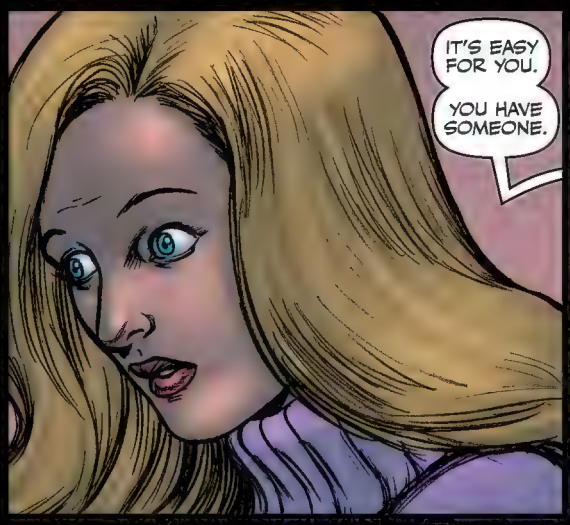
HUGHIE, IN MY EXPERIENCE, THERE'S NO POINT MAKIN' SPEECHES, MATE.
I MEAN YOU CAN TRY AN' TURN IT INTO A BIG SCENE, BUT...HE AIN'T LISTENIN'. LOOK AT HIM.

BEST THING TO DO IS JUST GET IT THE FUCK OVER WITH.


I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU.
MM-HM.
YOU'RE QUITTING?
LOOKS LIKE IT.
YOU THINK YOU CAN WALK AWAY FROM ALL THIS?
YOU'RE FUCKING A-RIGHT I DO.
WELL, GOOD FOR YOU.
HEY.

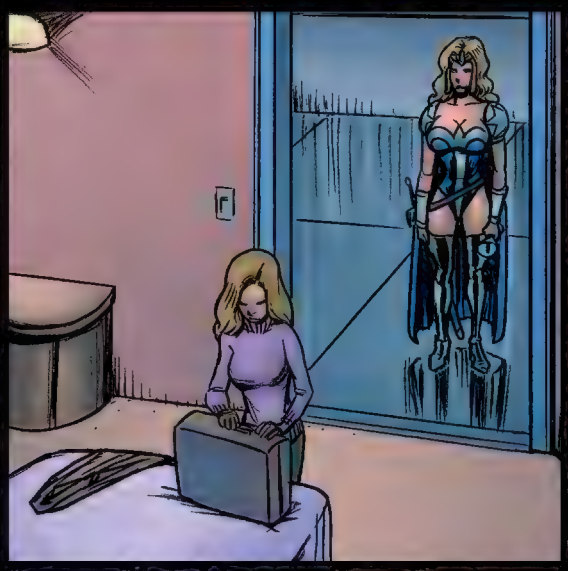

YOU STOOD UP FOR ME ONCE. WITH BLACK NOIR AND THOSE OTHER PRICKS.
NOW YOU'LL PROBABLY JUST SAY *DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD,* BUT I'M GOING TO MAKE AN ASS OF MYSELF AND SAY THERE MIGHT BE SOMEONE IN THERE. SOMEWHERE DOWN UNDER ALL THOSE LAYERS.

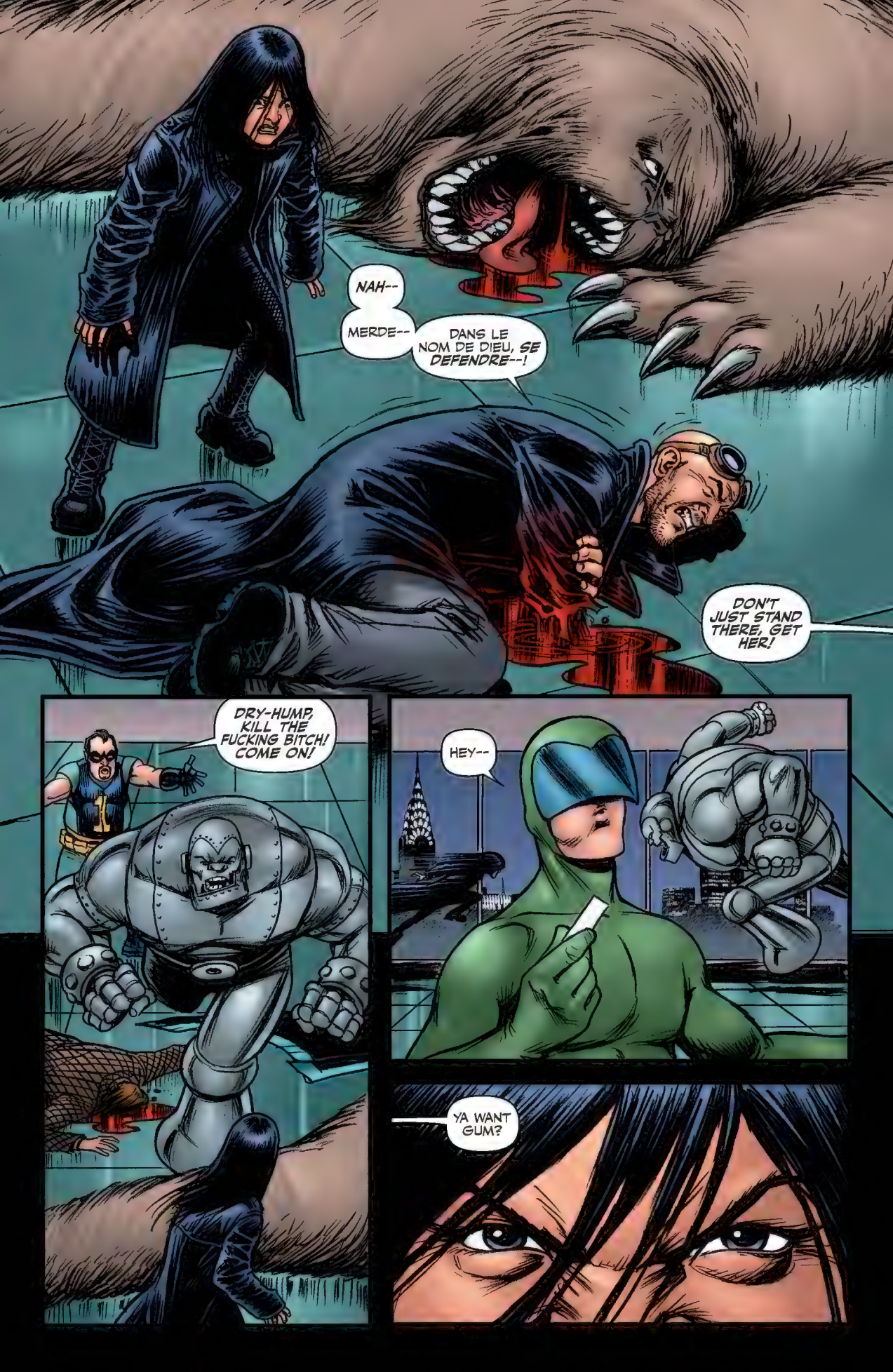
SO I'M ALSO GOING TO SAY THIS MIGHT BE THE TIME FOR YOU TO GO TOO. AND NOT JUST BECAUSE THE T.V. SAYS *PLEASE STAND BY* ON EVERY SINGLE CHANNEL, EITHER.
I NOTICED THAT.
IF YOU STILL THINK THIS IS THE ONLY PLACE TO RUN BACK TO--WELL, YOU CAN PROBABLY SIT OUT WHATEVER'S GOING ON, NO PROBLEM. YOU'VE GOT YOUR VIEW, YOU'VE GOT YOUR MEANINGLESS SHIT.
OTHERWISE...


IT'S EASY FOR YOU.
YOU HAVE SOMEONE.

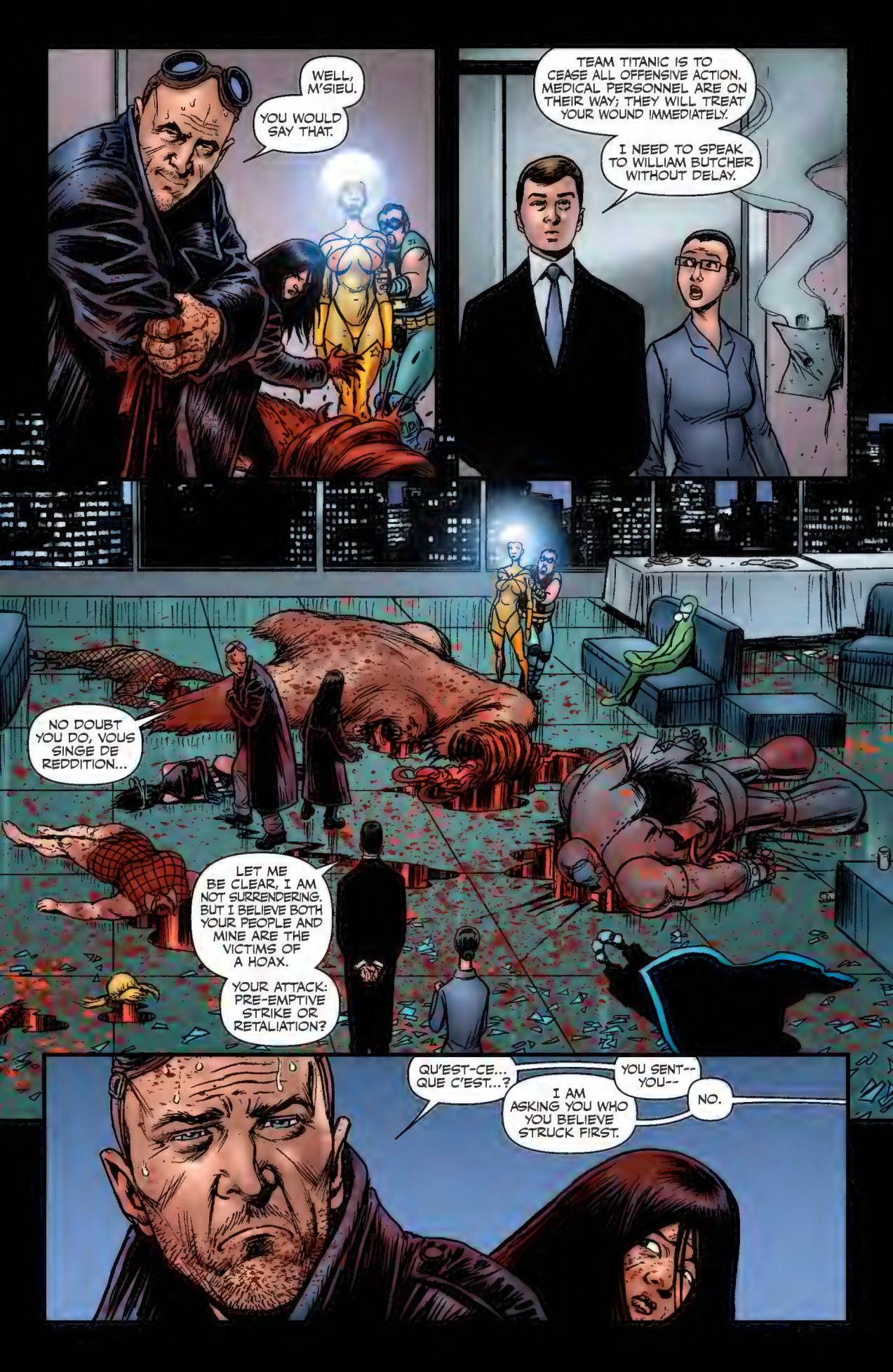
HMH.
ACTUALLY, I'M NOT A HUNDRED PERCENT CERTAIN THAT I DO. HE'S BEEN BEHAVING LIKE KIND OF A LITTLE BITCH.
THEY WILL DO IT.

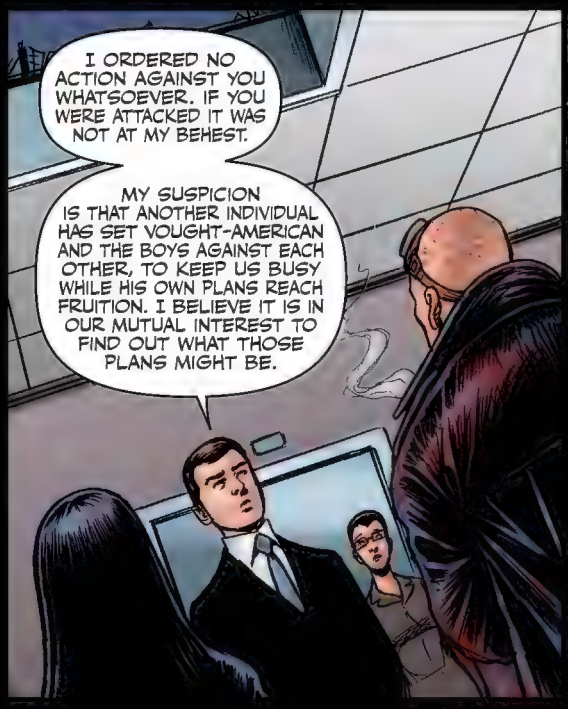
YEAH.
SO I SUPPOSE I'M JUST GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE THE CHANCE.



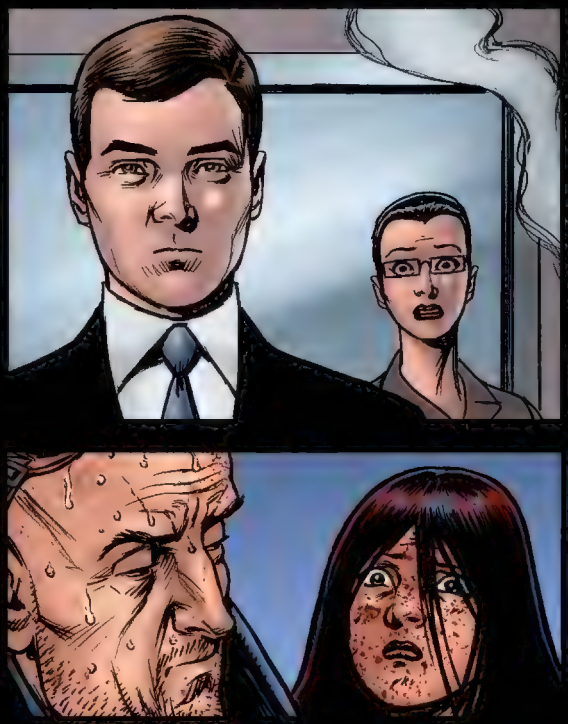

NAH--
MERDE--
DANS LE NOM DE DIEU, SE DEFENDRE--!
DON'T JUST STAND THERE, GET HER!
DRY-HUMP, KILL THE FUCKING BITCH! COME ON!
HEY--
YA WANT GUM?

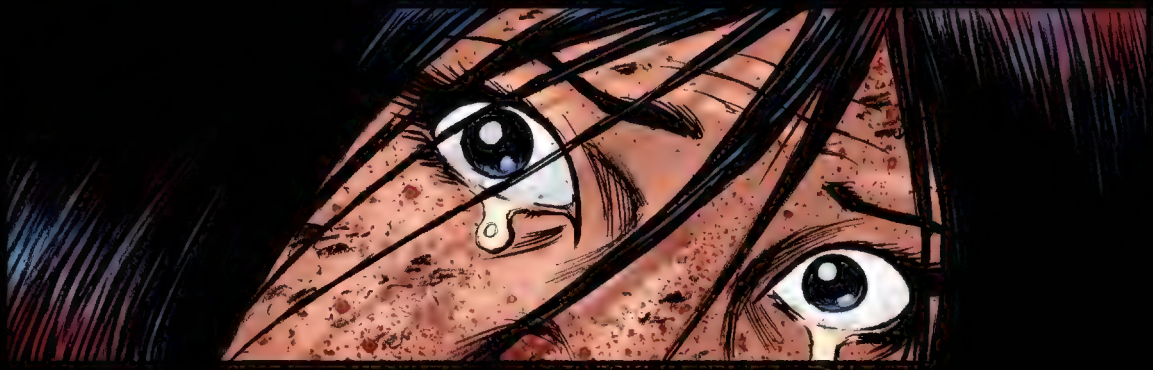
STAND DOWN.
NOW.


WELL, M'SIEU.
YOU WOULD SAY THAT.
TEAM TITANIC IS TO CEASE ALL OFFENSIVE ACTION. MEDICAL PERSONNEL ARE ON THEIR WAY; THEY WILL TREAT YOUR WOUND IMMEDIATELY.
I NEED TO SPEAK TO WILLIAM BUTCHER WITHOUT DELAY.
NO DOUBT YOU DO, VOUS SINGE DE REDDITION...
LET ME BE CLEAR, I AM NOT SURRENDERING. BUT I BELIEVE BOTH YOUR PEOPLE AND MINE ARE THE VICTIMS OF A HOAX.
YOUR ATTACK: PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE OR RETALIATION?
QU'EST-CE... QUE C'EST...?
YOU SENT-- YOU--
I AM ASKING YOU WHO YOU BELIEVE STRUCK FIRST.
NO.


I ORDERED NO ACTION AGAINST YOU WHATSOEVER. IF YOU WERE ATTACKED IT WAS NOT AT MY BEHEST.
MY SUSPICION IS THAT ANOTHER INDIVIDUAL HAS SET VOUGHT-AMERICAN AND THE BOYS AGAINST EACH OTHER, TO KEEP US BUSY WHILE HIS OWN PLANS REACH FRUITION. I BELIEVE IT IS IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST TO FIND OUT WHAT THOSE PLANS MIGHT BE.

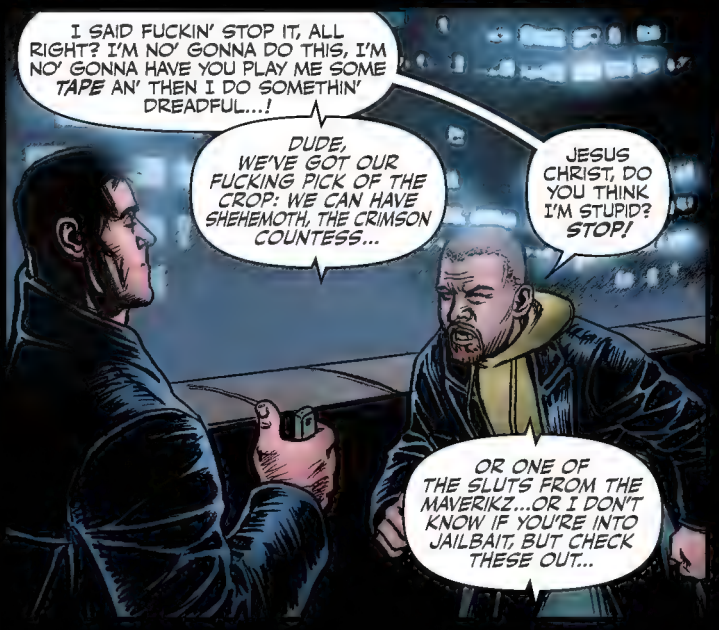
I AM OFFERING A TRUCE, NEGOTIATION AND MEDICAL ATTENTION.
IF YOU BELIEVE ME TO BE INSINCERE, THERE IS NOTHING WHATSOEVER TO PREVENT YOU FROM HAVING YOUR COMPANION KILL ME.





TO TAKE OVER FROM THE LAMPLIGHTER. WE'RE THINKING--WELL, WE'RE THINKING PUSSY.

HEY, TURN IT OFF...
HUH?
TURN IT OFF, I DON'T WANNA HEAR ANYMORE.
YEAH, TO MAKE US UP TO SEVEN AGAIN. I MEAN MAEVE'S NO FUCKING FUN...HEY, YOU WANNA SEE THE PHOTOS?


I SAID FUCKIN' STOP IT, ALL RIGHT? I'M NO' GONNA DO THIS, I'M NO' GONNA HAVE YOU PLAY ME SOME TAPE AN' THEN I DO SOMETHIN' DREADFUL...!
DUDE, WE'VE GOT OUR FUCKING PICK OF THE CROP: WE CAN HAVE SHEHEMOTH, THE CRIMSON COUNTESS...
JESUS CHRIST, DO YOU THINK I'M STUPID? STOP!
OR ONE OF THE SLUTS FROM THE MAVERIKZ...OR I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'RE INTO JAILBAIT, BUT CHECK THESE OUT...

I MEAN OLD ENOUGH TO BLEED, OLD ENOUGH TO--
JESUS, WHO THE FUCK IS THAT?
MM? OH, PEACHES AND CREAM. THAT'S STARLIGHT, FROM THE YOUNG AMERICANS.
YOU WONDERING WHAT SHE'D DO TO REACH THE HIGH FRONTIER?

FOR THE LAST FUCKIN' TIME.
THEY THINK WE'RE SHIT.
YOU CUNT.
YOU CUNT.
HOW DO YOU LIKE IT, DOWN ON YOUR FUCKIN' KNEES...?
WHAT?

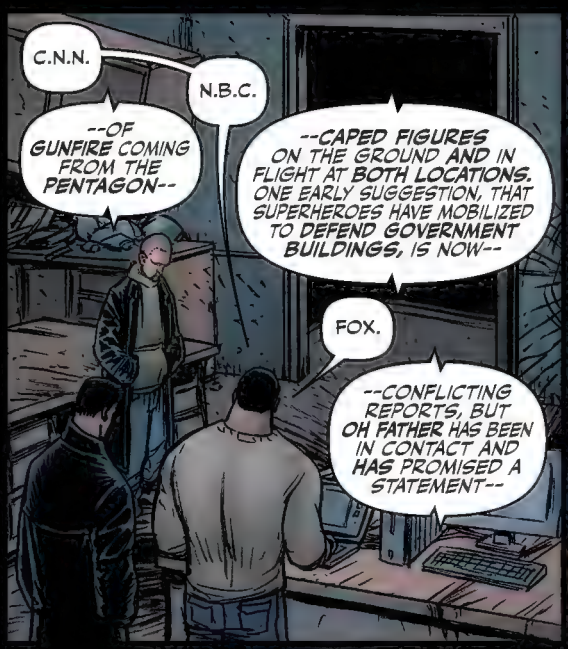
GOING SOMEWHERE?
WHAT'S IT TO YOU?
I HAVE A PLAN IN PLACE.
YOU MAY HAVE HEARD ABOUT IT ALREADY.
BUT THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT...
NO, THIS IS PERSONAL.
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO TO YOU.

WATCH OUT, MY LADY, HE'S TURNED BAD!
BUT I'LL PROTECT YOU! I WON'T LET HIM LAY A HAND ON YOU!
GAKKK
YES, MOST WONDERFUL WOMAN OF ALL! MAKE ME YOUR LIVING WEAPON!

HMH.

IT'S A METAL PROP, YOU STUPID WHORE.

YOU SEEN THIS SHIT?
AH, NO WORD FROM THE WHITE HOUSE AT THIS TIME, WE--


C.N.N.
N.B.C.
--OF GUNFIRE COMING FROM THE PENTAGON--
--CAPED FIGURES ON THE GROUND AND IN FLIGHT AT BOTH LOCATIONS. ONE EARLY SUGGESTION, THAT SUPERHEROES HAVE MOBILIZED TO DEFEND GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, IS NOW--
FOX.
--CONFLICTING REPORTS, BUT OH FATHER HAS BEEN IN CONTACT AND HAS PROMISED A STATEMENT--

LOOKIN' LIKE SOMEBODY DROPPED THE BIG ONE...
YEAH, ALL A BIT WHERE-WERE-YOU-THE-NIGHT-IT-STARTED, INNIT?
HERE'S OUR FIRST SURGICAL STRIKE.

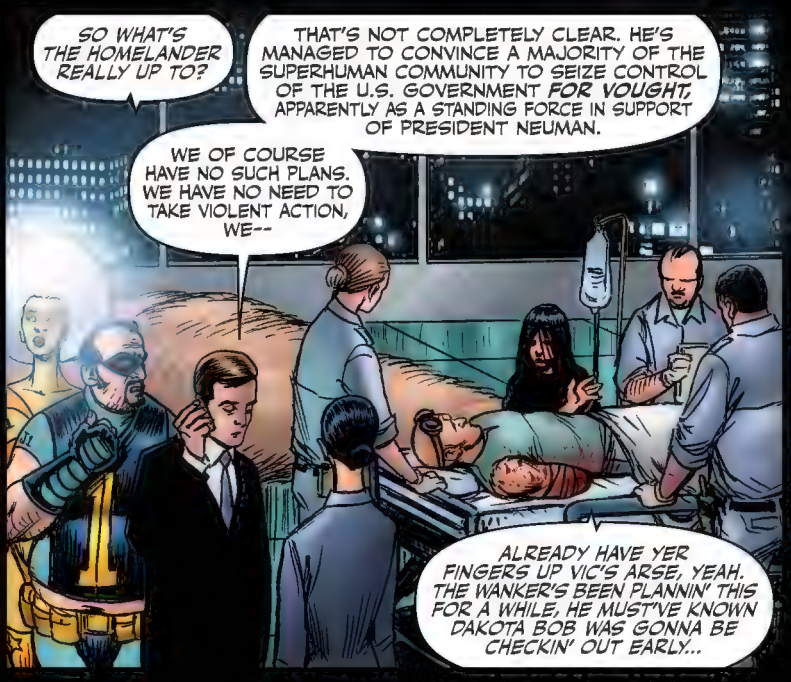
ALL DONE, FRENCHIE?
AH... NON, M'SIEU CHARCUTER.
THERE HAS BEEN A DEVELOPMENT.

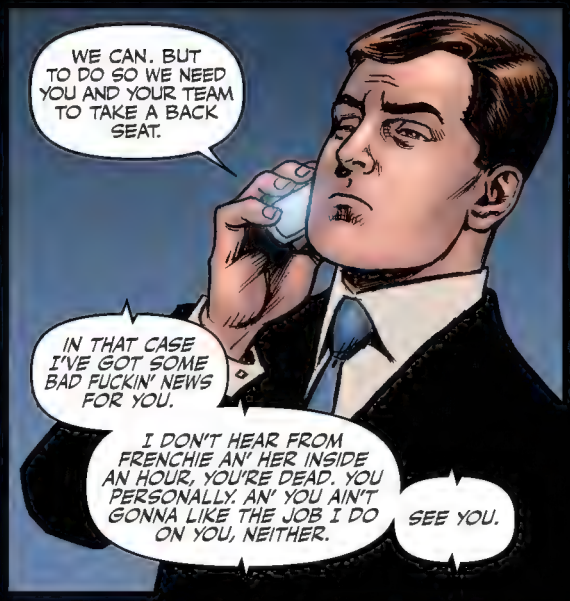
FRENCHIE, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
AH, OUI, OUI. PERHAPS A KILO LIGHTER, BUT WE ARE...WE ARE FREE TO GO WHENEVER WE LIKE.
YOU WHAT...?
THERE IS SOMEONE TO WHOM YOU SHOULD SPEAK, M'SIEU:

THIS IS JAMES STILLWELL OF THE VOUGHT-AMERICAN CORPORATION.

WELL, THIS IS MRS. BUTCHER'S LITTLE BOY. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
YOUR PEOPLE ARE RECEIVING MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR INJURIES INCURRED DURING THEIR ASSAULT ON EMPLOYEES OF THIS COMPANY. AFTER THAT THEY WILL INDEED BE FREE TO LEAVE.

THE HOMELANDER SENT PARALACTIC TO ATTACK YOU IN OUR NAME. HIS INTENTION WAS THAT YOU WOULD RETALIATE, KEEPING BOTH SIDES OCCUPIED WHILE HE PURSUED HIS OWN OBJECTIVES.
PROOF?
PARALACTIC ARE A JOKE: A COPY OF A COPY OF A G-COPY. I'D SEND SUPERDUPER AFTER YOU BEFORE I THOUGHT OF THEM.


SO WHAT'S THE HOMELANDER REALLY UP TO?
THAT'S NOT COMPLETELY CLEAR. HE'S MANAGED TO CONVINCE A MAJORITY OF THE SUPERHUMAN COMMUNITY TO SEIZE CONTROL OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT FOR VOUGHT, APPARENTLY AS A STANDING FORCE IN SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT NEUMAN.
WE OF COURSE HAVE NO SUCH PLANS. WE HAVE NO NEED TO TAKE VIOLENT ACTION, WE--
ALREADY HAVE YER FINGERS UP VIC'S ARSE, YEAH. THE WANKER'S BEEN PLANNIN' THIS FOR A WHILE, HE MUST'VE KNOWN DAKOTA BOB WAS GONNA BE CHECKIN' OUT EARLY...



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OVER THE HILL WITH THE SWORDS OF A THOUSAND MEN

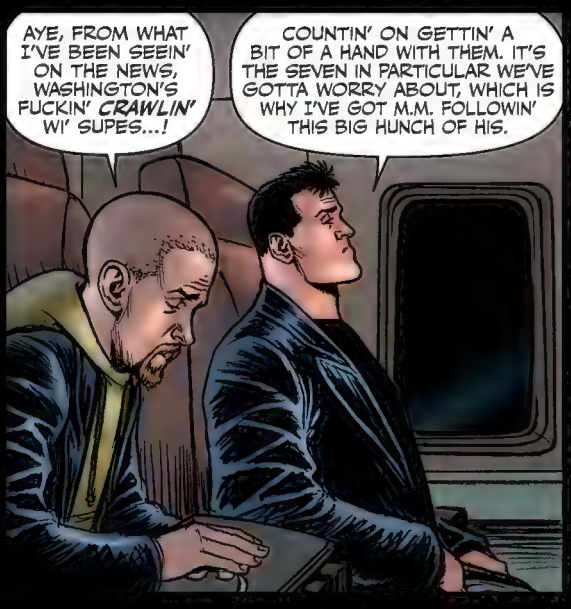
part five

...I DON'T BLAME HIM, TRYNNA FLY THROUGH THAT AIRSPACE TONIGHT'D BE SUICIDE. JUST MAKE SURE WE'VE GOT TRANSPORT WAITIN' AT DULLES.

AN' MAKE SURE THE BLOKE IN CHARGE KNOWS THE SCORE, WILL YOU? HOW'S THE REST OF IT COMIN'?
FUCK, I DIDN'T KNOW THEY HAD THAT MANY. MAGIC.

YEAH, ALL RIGHT, THEN.
SEE YOU.

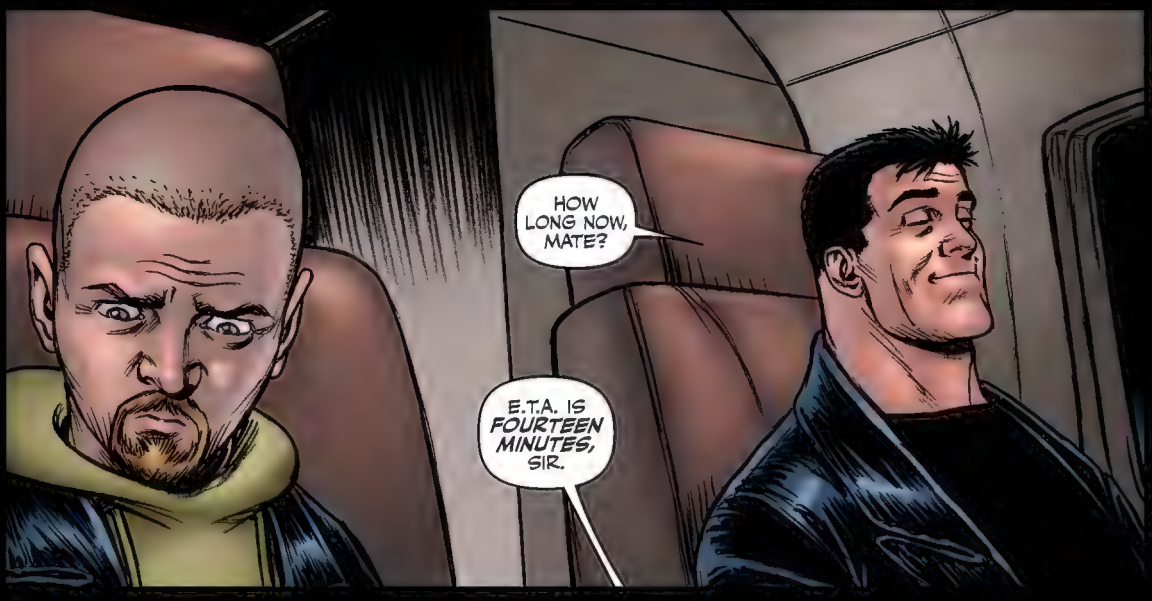
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WE HAD HALF O' THIS...!
YEAH, SOME OF IT'S A BIT OF A GIGGLE, INNIT?
JUST TALKIN' TO RAYNER, THERE. ALL SORTED. MEANIN' WE'RE WALKIN' INTO FUCK KNOWS WHAT, AN' SHE'S NICE AN' SAFE IN HER BUNKER...


AYE, FROM WHAT I'VE BEEN SEEIN' ON THE NEWS, WASHINGTON'S FUCKIN' CRAWLIN' WI' SUPES...!
COUNTIN' ON GETTIN' A BIT OF A HAND WITH THEM. IT'S THE SEVEN IN PARTICULAR WE'VE GOTTA WORRY ABOUT, WHICH IS WHY I'VE GOT M.M. FOLLOWIN' THIS BIG HUNCH OF HIS.

NOSE LIKE A FUCKIN' BLOODHOUND, THAT BLOKE.
HUGHIE?

ALL I'VE BEEN DOIN'S TRYNNA TOUGHEN YOU UP, MATE. I JUST CAN'T STAND THE THOUGHT O' YOU GETTIN' HURT.

'COS THIS FUCKIN' WORLD'LL EAT YOU ALIVE IF YOU LET IT.


HOW LONG NOW, MATE?
E.T.A. IS FOURTEEN MINUTES, SIR.

--SOURCE OR SOURCES REMAIN UNCLEAR, BUT A TIDAL WAVE OF IMAGES AND DOCUMENTATION--
--SUPERHERO COMMUNITY, SEEMINGLY OVER SEVERAL DECADES--
--ALLEGATIONS INCLUDING--
--HEELS OF THE RECENT SCANDAL INVOLVING JACK FROM JUPITER--
--FRESH LIGHT ON EVENTS IN WASHINGTON D.C. TODAY--
--AMONGST OTHERS, LINKS TO RUSSIAN ORGANIZED CRIME, WHOSE--
M. MARATHON
9/11/01
--TRAGEDY OF SEPTEMBER THE ELEVENTH, WHEN INTERNATIONALLY FAMOUS TEAM THE SEVEN ARE ALLEGED TO HAVE BOARDED--
--DESTROYED THE LEVEES TO CAUSE WIDESPREAD FLOODING AND WHAT'S BEEN TERMED ETHNIC CLEANSING, FREEING UP VALUABLE REAL ESTATE FOR--
--OF A CONSPIRACY INVOLVING THE VOUGHT-AMERICAN CORPORATION AND PRESIDENT VICTOR NEUMAN, WITH A PROGRAM TO PUSH SUPERHUMAN DEVELOPMENT ON THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT: ULTIMATELY REPLACING MEN AND MACHINES WITH--
NORAD, I JUST BLEW A PLANE-LOAD OF AMERICANS OUT OF THE SKY, IF WE LET THIS ONE THROUGH IT WAS FOR NOTHING! PLEASE!
--MOST DISTURBING OF ALL, A SERIES OF PHOTGRAPHS SHOWING THE HOMELA
ENOUGH.
?

OH.
THESE DON'T OPEN THE WHOLE WAY. YOU'LL HAVE TO SMASH YOUR WAY IN OR USE LASER-VISION OR SOMETHING.
TRY TO DO IT QUIETLY, I'M HAVING THE WORST HEADACHE OF MY ENTIRE LIFE.

CHIEF, ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THE AUTHORIZATION FOR THESE THINGS...?
ONE HUNDRED PERCENT.

OKAY, BECAUSE I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THEM BEFORE. FOR STARTERS THEY'RE D.U.-TIPPED-- SINCE WHEN DO A.A. MISSILES NEED ARMOR-PIERCING CAPABILITY?
AND THIS LITTLE WHATEVER-IT-IS HERE, I DON'T KNOW HOW THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO FLY STRAIGHT WITH THOSE BOLTED ONTO THE SIDE...
JESUS, THE JOINT CHIEFS FORGOT TO CONSULT YOU AGAIN. WILL YOU PLEASE JUST GET THE DAMN THINGS ON THE RAILS?
BECAUSE BY THE LOOK OF WHAT'S BEEN FLYING IN--

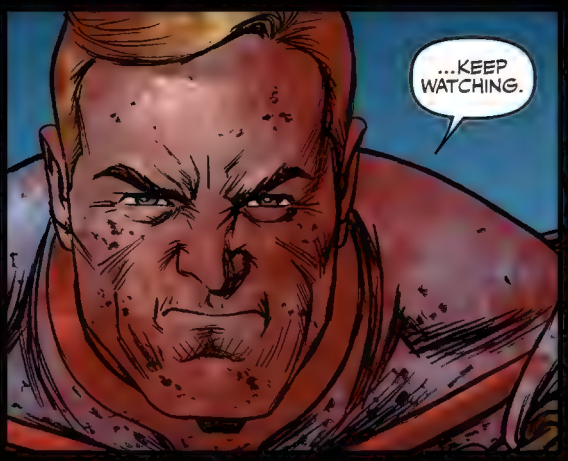
15109
"YOU GOT EVERYTHING NOT IN PAKISTAN STILL TO GO."

SECURITY, STAND DOWN.
BUT SIR, WE--
STAND DOWN. I WON'T BE NEEDING YOU.
WISE.
THERE'S NOTHING THEY COULD DO TO HELP YOU, ANYWAY.
I SEE BUTCHER'S LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG.
ONLY BECAUSE OF THIS NONSENSE OF YOURS IN WASHINGTON. I'D TELL YOU HOW MANY YEARS OF WORK YOU'VE RUINED, BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE YOU CARE IN THE SLIGHTEST.
STILL EIGHTY OVER SIXTY.
YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE TORN LIMB FROM LIMB, AND YOU'RE COMPLETELY CALM.
OH, LET'S NOT PRETEND I WAS GOING TO GET AN INVITATION TO THAT PARTICULAR PARTY. ONCE YOU HAD VIC IN PLACE AND THE DEFENSE CONTRACTS WERE COMING IN, WE WERE ALL GOING TO BE REPLACED.
YOU'RE GROWING THE NEW ME RIGHT NOW. SOME CAMO-CLOTHED TACTICAL GENIUS VERSION THAT DOES EXACTLY WHAT IT'S TOLD.
HMH.

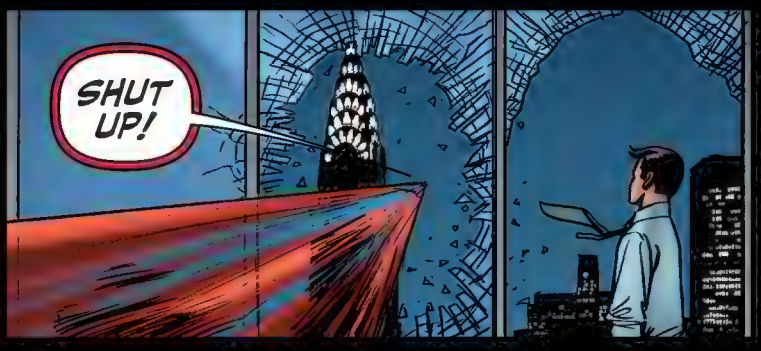
I THINK I'VE FINALLY MET A SUPERHUMAN...
WHY, BECAUSE YOU'VE NEVER MANAGED TO IMPRESS ME?
THINK ABOUT IT. THIS IS PAR FOR THE COURSE WITH YOU.
WHEN HAVE YOU EVER DONE ANYTHING REMOTELY INTERESTING OR ORIGINAL? WHAT HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF TO DO THAT THE LOWEST SPECK OF THIS POINTLESS SPECIES COULDN'T, WERE THEY TO BE GRANTED YOUR LEVEL OF POWER?
AND WHAT NEXT, DESTROY ANOTHER AIRLINER? DISMEMBER MORE FAMILIES, THAT KIND OF THING?
A SPOILED CHILD'S PERSONAL AUSCHWITZ. IT'S SO PETTY IT'S ACTUALLY QUITE EMBARASSING.
I'M JUST GLAD I WON'T BE ALIVE TO SEE IT...
WHAT?
YOU KNOW, I THINK I'LL SAVE YOU THE TROUBLE. I'LL JUMP.
STOP FUCKING AROUND. YOU THINK I NEED TO IMPRESS YOU?

YOU SMUG FUCKING COCKSUCKING PRICK, YOU REALLY THINK I'M LOOKING FOR--
OH, GOD. KILL ME NOW.
JUST BECAUSE I STOOD AND TOOK YOUR SHIT, WHEN ANY TIME I CHOSE I COULD HAVE--
PLEASE KILL ME?

YOU--
YOU--!


...KEEP WATCHING.

JUST KEEP WATCHING. THAT'S ALL I'M GOING TO SAY.
I WILL, BELIEVE ME.
SHUT UP.


SHUT UP!

OR I WOULD, IF I THOUGHT YOU HAD SOMETHING WORTH SEEING.

I MEAN WE'VE DONE THIS FOR HIM AND VOUGHT, YOU'D THINK HE'D PUT OUT A STATEMENT OR SOMETHING...
YEAH, THE HOMELANDER SAID THERE'D BE SOMETHING ABOUT IT, LIKE VIC WOULD SAY WE WERE FIGHTING DAKOTA BOB LOYALISTS...
WHERE IS THE HOMELANDER, ANYWAY?
COMIN'.
WHAT THE FUCK YOU MEAN THEY STILL FIGHTIN'? YOU SUPERHEROES, GODDAMMIT...!
WE, WE DIDN'T HAVE ALL THE BULLETPROOF GUYS UP FRONT... IT GOT KIND OF CONFUSING WHEN WE WENT IN...
WHY HASN'T VIC SAID ANYTHING YET?
HE'S COMIN', HE'S ON HIS WAY.
HE SAID SECURE THE WHITE HOUSE FOR WHEN HE ARRIVES-- WE DONE THAT. YOUR TEAMS SHOULDA TAKEN THE PENTAGON BY NOW, SO WHAT THE FUCK'S KEEPIN' YOU FROM--
HOW COME THE COPS ARE STAYING PUT?
I MEAN THEY'VE BEEN TURNING CIVILIANS AWAY, BUT THAT'S ALL...IT'S LIKE THEY'VE BEEN TOLD TO LEAVE US BE...
MAYBE THEY WAITIN' TO SEE WHO WINS. MAYBE VOUGHT GOT IN TOUCH ALREADY.
CAN WE STICK TO THE GODDAMN POINT HERE? PLEASE?
OH FATHER!

OH FATHER, CAN WE GET THAT STATEMENT NOW--?
JESUS FUCKIN' CHRIST, YOU DIDN'T EVEN TELL SOMEONE TO *KEEP THEM OUTTA HERE...*?

NO COMMENT.
SIR, IN LIGHT OF--
SIR, ARE YOU STILL STICKING TO THAT STORY?
NO COMMENT. THIS IS A DANGEROUS AREA, THERE ARE STILL DISSIDENTS INSIDE THE BUILDING.

'FUCK YOU SAY?
OH FATHER, AMONG TONIGHT'S REVELATIONS WAS A CONFIDENTIAL REPORT CONCERNING THE RECENT MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF YOUR WARDS, THE JUNIOR TEAM *SIDEKICK TWELVE*. HAVE YOU READ THE REPORT?
DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON *IT*?

JESUS, THE WHOLE BLOODY ARMY'S HERE...!
MARINES, HUGHIE.

EH?
THESE BOYS ARE MARINES. MIGHT BE A GOOD OMEN, I WAS A BOOTNECK MESELF.

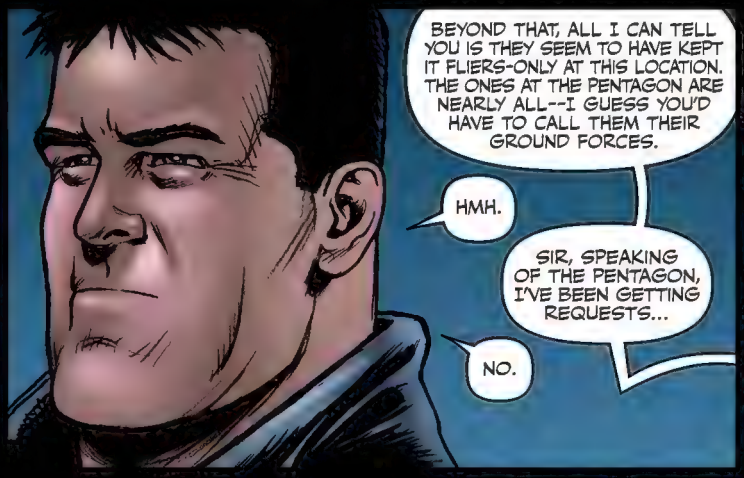
THEN AGAIN, I DID GET MY LOT FUCKIN' KILLED...
ARE YOU *BUTCHER?*
THAT'S ME.

COLONEL JOHN LANHAM, MARFORCOM. SIR, I AM INSTRUCTED TO HAND OVER OPERATIONAL CONTROL TO YOU AND AWAIT YOUR ORDERS.
CHEERS, COLONEL.

THEY TOLD ME PROMOTION WAS ON THE CARDS, SO LONG AS I HELD ON LONG ENOUGH.
THAT'S AN AWFUL LOT O' FLYIN' WANKERS UP THERE. WOULD THAT BE YOUR TACTICAL ANALYSIS TOO, LANCE-CORPORAL CAMPBELL?
EH? OH.
AYE.

WHAT THEY BEEN UP TO, ANYWAY?
HOLDING THEIR POSITION, AT LEAST SINCE WE GOT HERE. THEY'VE BEEN WATCHING US ASSEMBLE, NOTHING ELSE.
ANY SIGN O' THE HOMELANDER YET?

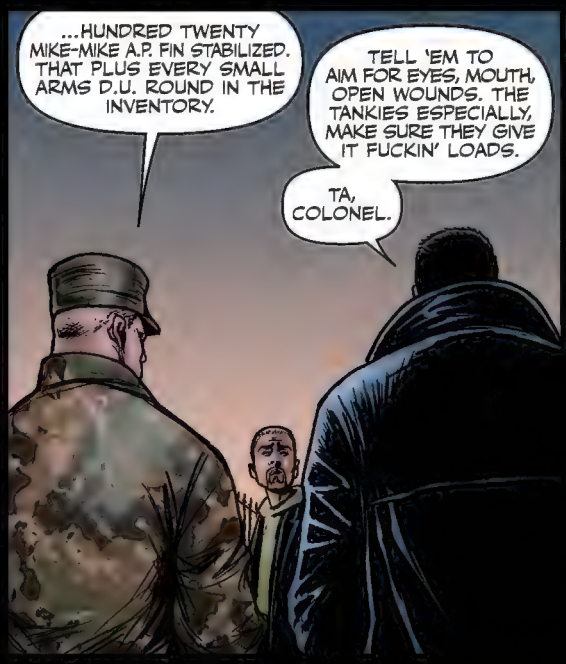
MIKE, YOU SAW HIM?
AFFIRMATIVE, SIR, MAYBE TWENTY MINUTES AGO. DROPPED DOWN PAST THE REST AND ENTERED THE OVAL OFFICE.
NO SIGN SINCE.


BEYOND THAT, ALL I CAN TELL YOU IS THEY SEEM TO HAVE KEPT IT FLIERS-ONLY AT THIS LOCATION. THE ONES AT THE PENTAGON ARE NEARLY ALL--I GUESS YOU'D HAVE TO CALL THEM THEIR GROUND FORCES.
HMH.
SIR, SPEAKING OF THE PENTAGON, I'VE BEEN GETTING REQUESTS...
NO.

LADS DOWN THERE'LL HAVE TO HANG ON AS BEST THEY CAN. IT AIN'T WORTH SPLITTIN' OUR FORCES HERE, NOT FOR SOME SORT O' RESCUE MISSION WE AIN'T GOT TIME TO PLAN RIGHT.
I CONCUR, SIR. WHATEVER HAPPENS--

I THINK IT'LL BE DECIDED HERE.

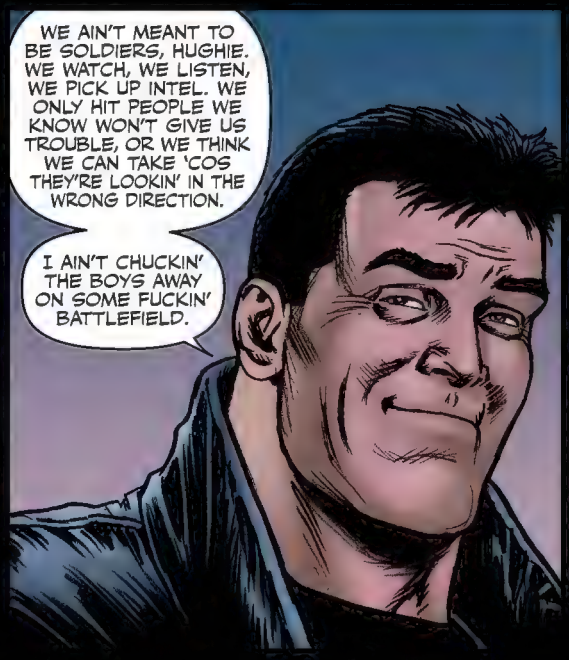
OH YEAH, WHAT ABOUT OUR AIR SUPPORT?
WHAT THEY'RE TELLING ME IS THERE'LL BE TWO GROUPS: ONE OF INTERCEPTORS, THE OTHER PRIMARILY A-10s. DIVISION OF TARGETS IS PRETTY OBVIOUS.
THEY'RE RELUCTANT TO INITIATE BEFORE DAWN; THEY WANT DAYLIGHT TO MINIMIZE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES.
LANHAM
MAKES SENSE. PLUS THEY CAN COME IN OUTTA THE SUN.
YOU KNOW, I COULD FUCKIN' MURDER A CUPPA...
THAT MEANS WHAT YOU THINK IT DOES, LIEUTENANT.
YES SIR. PRIVATE ZABARNOWSKI!
GO WITH HIM, HUGHIE. DON'T LET HIM MAKE COFFEE, WHATEVER YOU DO.
YOU KNOW WHO'D'VE LOVED ALL THIS?
OL' MALLORY.
33


...HUNDRED TWENTY MIKE-MIKE A.P. FIN STABILIZED. THAT PLUS EVERY SMALL ARMS D.U. ROUND IN THE INVENTORY.
TELL 'EM TO AIM FOR EYES, MOUTH, OPEN WOUNDS. THE TANKIES ESPECIALLY, MAKE SURE THEY GIVE IT FUCKIN' LOADS.
TA, COLONEL.

ALL RIGHT, HUGHIE, THAT'S ME...
EH?
WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT? WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT *OPEN WOUNDS*...?

GONNA TRY AN' MAKE A COUPLE.
I'M GOIN' IN THERE AFTER THE HOMELANDER.

BUT-- BUT--ON YER OWN...?
MM-HM.
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS? D'YOU NO' WANNA WAIT FOR FRENCHIE AN' THE FEMALE AN' M.M.?
WRONG JOB FOR 'EM.


WE AIN'T MEANT TO BE SOLDIERS, HUGHIE. WE WATCH, WE LISTEN, WE PICK UP INTEL. WE ONLY HIT PEOPLE WE KNOW WON'T GIVE US TROUBLE, OR WE THINK WE CAN TAKE 'COS THEY'RE LOOKIN' IN THE WRONG DIRECTION.
I AIN'T CHUCKIN' THE BOYS AWAY ON SOME FUCKIN' BATTLEFIELD.

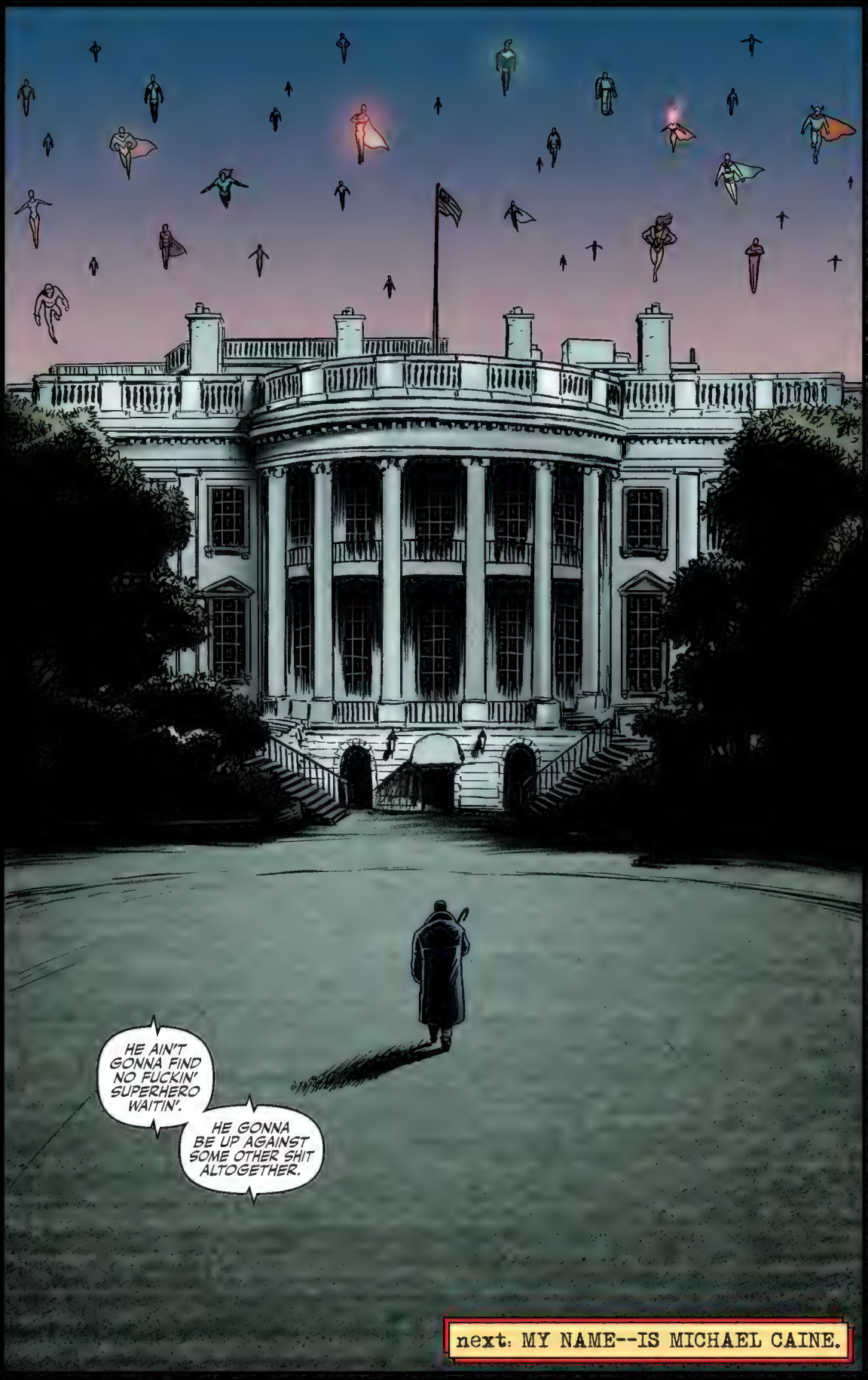
WHAT ABOUT YOU...?
WELL, THIS IS BETWEEN ME AN' CUNTYBOLLOCKS, INNIT?
I TOLD YOU IT WAS MY TURN.

YOU CAN'T GO IN THERE BY YERSELF! I'M COMIN' WITH YOU, THERE'S NO FUCKIN' WAY--
OH NO YOU BLOODY AIN'T. COLONEL, IF THIS LAD COMES AFTER ME, DON'T BOTHER TRYNNA GRAB HIM-- JUST HAVE SOMEONE BLOW ONE OF HIS KNEECAPS OFF, ALL RIGHT?

CHEERS, HUGHIE.
SEE YOU.

GODDAMMIT, PICK UP, YOU--
FRENCHIE?
BONJOUR, LAIT DE LA MER!
OH, SHIT--!
ALL IS WELL, MON BRAVE. LE COCHON AT VOUGHT WAS AS GOOD AS HIS WORD.
WHAT NEWS OF M'SIEU CHARCUTER, ET PETIT HUGHIE?
UH--FUCKED. IF I DON'T GET THROUGH TO ONE OF 'EM SOON.
THE WHOLE GODDAMN SYSTEM CRASHED, EVERYONE'S TALKIN' TO EVERYONE ABOUT THIS SUPE BULLSHIT...
M.M.?
HUGHIE? WHERE THE FUCK YOU AT, MAN? WHAT THE FUCK IS HAPPENIN'?
OH JESUS, WHERE TO BEGIN? THERE'S FUCKIN' SOLDIERS EVERYWHERE, THE SKY'S FULLA SUPES, AN' BUTCHER'S AWAY INTO THE WHITE HOUSE TO TAKE ON THE HOMELANDER SINGLE-HANDED...!
HUGHIE--
WHAT ABOUT BLACK NOIR?

UH, WHAT ABOUT HIM...?
YOU SEEN HIM? YOU HEARD ANYONE MENTION HIM?
NO...
I MEAN JUST ABOUT EVERY OTHER SUPE IN THE WORLD'S HERE, BUT NO' HIM.
THEY'RE JUST HANGIN' IN THE SKY WATCHIN' BUTCHER WALK IN THERE, THEY'RE NO' DOIN' ANYTHIN' TO STOP HIM...
YEAH, I BET THE GODDAMN HOMELANDER'S ALREADY LICKIN' HIS LIPS. YOU GO AFTER HIM, GET HIM TO COME THE FUCK BACK?
NO, HE MADE PRETTY BLOODY SURE I'D BE STAYIN' PUT. HE EVEN TURNED HIS PHONE OFF.
LISTEN, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT BLACK NOIR?
FUCK. FUCK. HE--
OKAY, THE LEGEND GOT ME INTO VOUGHT'S SYSTEM AGAIN. I WAS RIGHT ABOUT THE IDENT CODE BEIN' BLACK NOIR.
HUGHIE, THIS WHOLE THING--I THINK IT MIGHTA BEEN ABOUT HIM ALL ALONG, MAN. I MEAN, WE COULDA BEEN LOOKIN' IN THE WRONG GODDAMN DIRECTION THE WHOLE TIME.
I MEAN THIS IS-- THIS IS THE FUCKED UP PARTA FUCKED UP. BUTCHER WALKS INTO THAT PLACE NOW, AN' SHIT'S GONE DOWN LIKE I THINK IT HAS?


HE AIN'T GONNA FIND NO FUCKIN' SUPERHERO WAITIN'.
HE GONNA BE UP AGAINST SOME OTHER SHIT ALTOGETHER.
next: MY NAME--IS MICHAEL CAINE.

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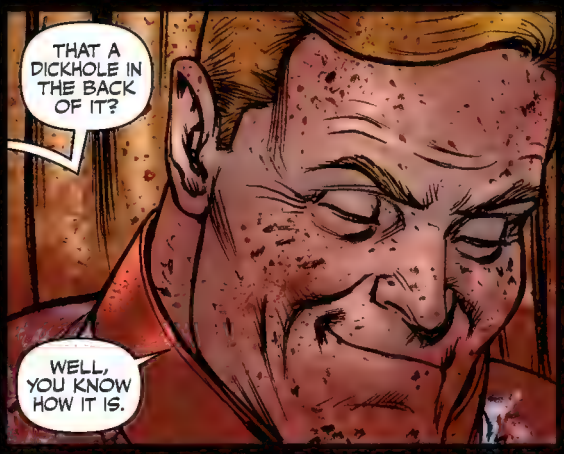
ALL CALLSIGNS, THIS IS AWACS, WE HAVE YOU TURNING DUE WEST AFTER FINAL FORMATION R.V.. LOOKING GOOD.
YOUR TARGETS ARE SHOWING UP CLEAR AS DAY, AH, WE HAVE THE SAME MAGIC BOXES AS FITTED TO YOUR AMRAAMS AND WE ARE GETTING AN AMAZING PICTURE...
AH, ALL CALLSIGNS, AT THIS TIME YOU ARE WEAPONS-FREE, ACKNOWLEDGE?
BIG DUKE ONE, COPY THAT.
PREACHER ONE, COPY.
IDAHO LEADER, COPY.
CASTLE RED LEADER, ACKNOWLEDGED.
TOP CAT LEADER, COPY.
PAYBACK RED ONE, COPY THAT.
ARCHER LEADER, COPY LOUD AND CLEAR.
LET'S SEE WHO TAKES WHOSE FUCKIN' JOB.

OVER THE HILL WITH THE SWORDS OF A THOUSAND MEN

conclusion

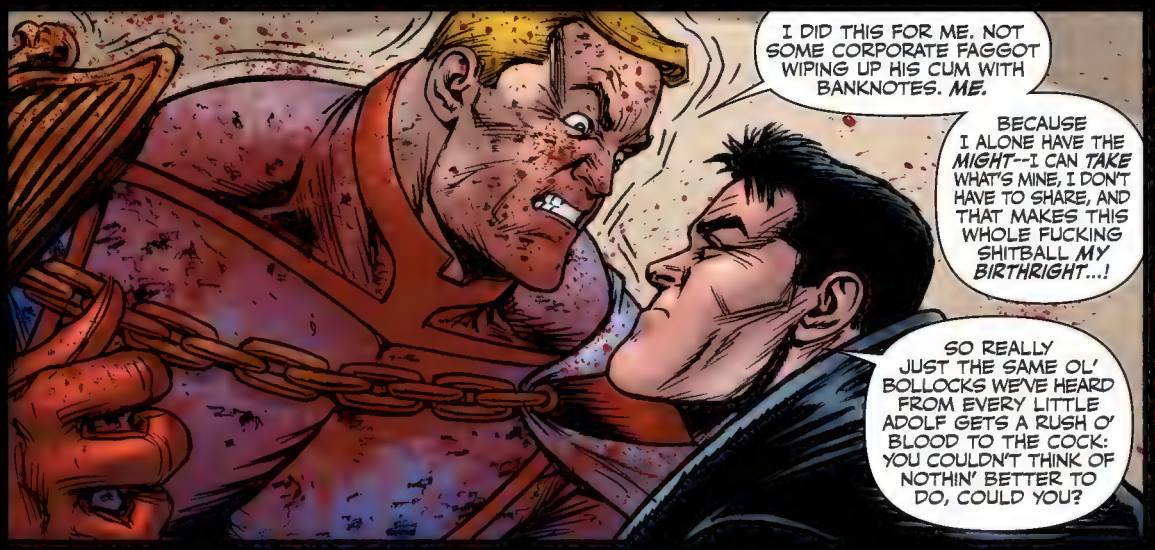
SEE?
HNH--

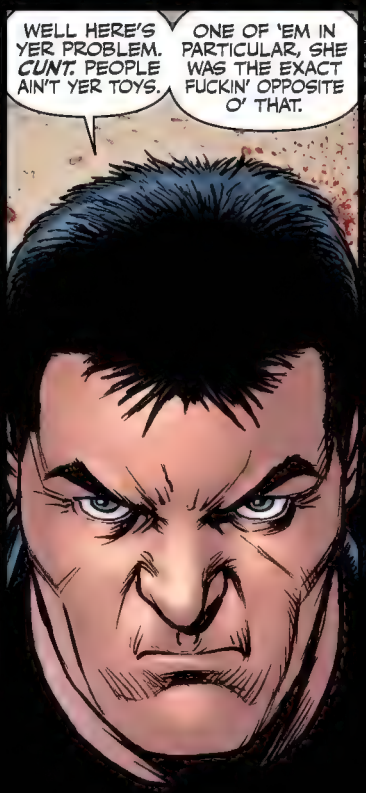

THAT A DICKHOLE IN THE BACK OF IT?
WELL, YOU KNOW HOW IT IS.

IMPRESSIVE STUFF.

I'M NOT FUCKING TRYING TO FUCKING IMPRESS ANYBODY!!

I DON'T HAVE TO. THE WORLD'S MINE.
PEOPLE ARE TOYS, THEY'RE FUCKING *PASTE*, AND YOU AND VOUGHT AND ALL THE OTHER WORMSHIT CAN *FUCK YOURSELVES*--!


I DID THIS FOR ME. NOT SOME CORPORATE FAGGOT WIPING UP HIS CUM WITH BANKNOTES. *ME.*
BECAUSE I ALONE HAVE THE *MIGHT*--I CAN *TAKE* WHAT'S MINE, I DON'T HAVE TO SHARE, AND THAT MAKES THIS WHOLE FUCKING SHITBALL *MY BIRTHRIGHT*...!
SO REALLY JUST THE SAME OL' BOLLOCKS WE'VE HEARD FROM EVERY LITTLE ADOLF GETS A RUSH O' BLOOD TO THE COCK: YOU COULDN'T THINK OF NOTHIN' BETTER TO DO, COULD YOU?


WELL HERE'S YER PROBLEM. *CUNT.* PEOPLE AIN'T YER TOYS.
ONE OF 'EM IN PARTICULAR, SHE WAS THE EXACT FUCKIN' OPPOSITE O' THAT.

AH, OF COURSE. NOW WE'RE GETTING TO IT.

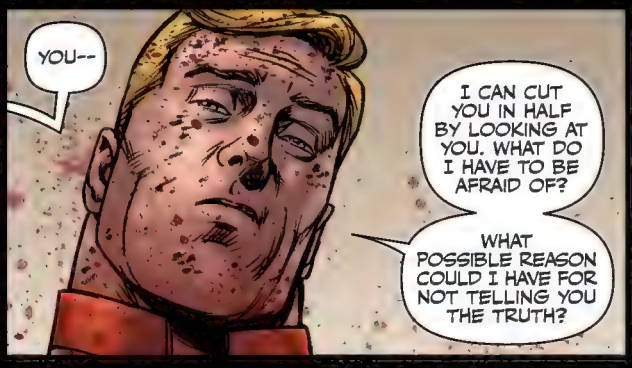
THE WIFE.

HE DON'T LOOK IT, BUT THE HOMELANDER WAS GROWN FROM STORMFRONT'S D.N.A..
STORMFRONT WAS JUST A KID INJECTED WITH COMPOUND V BACK IN THE THIRTIES, BEFORE VOGELBAUM TOOK HIM OUTTA GERMANY AN' HANDED HIM OVER TO V.A.C.. HE WAS HOT SHIT, NO DENYIN' THAT.
BUT THE HOMELANDER WAS SOMETHIN' ELSE AGAIN. THE V GOES INTO THE D.N.A. AN' THE WHOLE LOT GOES INTO A EMBRYO. SOME POOR BITCH GETS SET UP TO CARRY IT TO TERM.
THE LEGEND SAID...
RIGHT.
"WHICH IS WHY HE GROWS UP UNDERGROUND, WIT' A NUKE READY TO GO OFF IF HE LOOKS AT ANYONE SIDEWAYS.
"EVENTUALLY THEY FIGURE OUT, OKAY, CAN'T BLAME A NEWBORN KID FOR GOIN' CRAZY, JUST BAD LUCK HE HAS THE POWERS HE DOES. I MEAN BIRTH'S FUCKIN' TERRIFYIN' ANYHOW, THAT'S HOW COME NO ONE EVER REMEMBERS IT.
"VOUGHT PUT A LOTTA MONEY INTO THIS ASSHOLE, THEY DON'T WANNA JUST PULL THE PLUG. BUT ALL THE SAME, THEY AIN'T TAKIN' NO MORE CHANCES THAN THEY GOTTA."

THEY DECIDE THEY NEED A WAY TO PUT THE HOMELANDER DOWN IF IT EVER COMES TO IT. NOT A BOMB, SHIT LIKE THAT AIN'T PRACTICAL. SOMETHIN' THEY CAN USE ON HIM NO MATTER WHERE HE IS, SOMETHIN' THEY CAN SEND--
SOMEONE.
FUCK.
BLACK NOIR.
IN ONE. THEY TAKE THE D.N.A. AN' THEY FUCK AROUND WIT' IT SOME MORE. THEY GOIN' FOR SOMETHIN' NEW--BETTER, STRONGER, ON ACCOUNTA WHAT HE'S GOTTA DO.
NOT THAT THEY TELL THE HOMELANDER ANY A' THIS. 'FAR AS HE'S CONCERNED, BLACK NOIR'S JUST SOME KINDA SIDEKICK--AN' THEN MAEVE AN' MARATHON AN' THE DEEP COME OUTTA THE SAME TEST TUBE, AN' ALL OF A SUDDEN THEY A TEAM.
"THE HOMELANDER'S HAPPY, 'CAUSE HE'S IN CHARGE.
"VOUGHT'RE HAPPY, 'CAUSE THEY GOT THEIR LIVIN' FUCKIN' WEAPON RIGHT NEXT TO ITS TARGET.
"BLACK NOIR'S HAPPY 'CAUSE IF HE EVER GETS THE WORD--AN' THIS IS THE GODDAMN REASON HE EXISTS, DON'T FORGET--HE CAN GET RIGHT THE FUCK TO IT."
SO--HAVE VOUGHT SENT BLACK NOIR AFTER HIM NOW?
AIN'T THAT SIMPLE.
BRACE YOUR ASS.

I REMEMBER NOTHING ABOUT YOUR WIFE.
I'LL TAKE A GUESS AND SAY RAPE AND MURDER.
BUT I HAVE NO RECOLLECTION OF HER AT ALL.
THAT'S PRETTY TYPICAL. THERE ARE THINGS I REMEMBER AND THINGS I DON'T.
THE AIRLINER: YES. THE FAMILY AFTER BELIEVE: YES. THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE: NO. THE THINGS I'M DOING IN THOSE PICTURES:
"NO, DEFINITELY NOT. I WAS SHOCKED BEYOND BELIEF WHEN I SAW THOSE.
"THANKS FOR POPPING THOSE ON YOUTUBE, INCIDENTALLY. THERE REALLY IS NO GOING BACK FOR ME NOW."

WHAT IS ALL THIS FUCKIN' SHIT, YOU TRYNNA WIND ME UP?
I'M NOT DENYING THAT. BUT I'M NOT LYING.


YOU--
I CAN CUT YOU IN HALF BY LOOKING AT YOU. WHAT DO I HAVE TO BE AFRAID OF?
WHAT POSSIBLE REASON COULD I HAVE FOR NOT TELLING YOU THE TRUTH?

WHICH IS THAT I HAVE NO MORE MEMORY OF KILLING THIS CUNT OF YOURS THAN I DO OF MY FIRST SHIT.

HA HA HA HA, DO YOU KNOW WHAT I HAVE JUST REMEMBERED? SEEING YOU STANDING THERE WITH THAT FUCKING STUPID THING?
HA! HA HA HA HA HA!

MAEVE--HA! SPEAKING OF CUNTS!
MAEVE HIT ME WITH A SWORD...!
HHEEEEENNNHHH

HHEEENNNHHH
WHAT--
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...?
HHEE--

TIME GOES BY AN' THE SEVEN MAKE VOUGHT A GODDAMN FORTUNE. HOMELANDER LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEHAVIN' HIMSELF. EVERYONE BREATHIN' A BIG FUCKIN' SIGHA RELIEF.
BLACK NOIR KINDA SLIPS INTO THE BACKGROUND. DON'T SAY MUCH, DON'T DO MUCH. COMPANY SHRINK CAN'T GET SHIT OUTTA HIM, JUST SAYS THE DUDE'S KINDA WITHDRAWN.
WHAT THEY DO SEE IS, HIM AN' THE HOMELANDER SEEM TO BE DOIN' OKAY. THEY AIN'T CLOSE, BUT THE HOMELANDER KINDA LIKES HOW BLACK NOIR'S ALWAYS AROUND--HE DON'T KNOW WHAT THE MUTHAFUCKA'S THERE FOR, ALL HE SEES IS SOMEONE FOLLOWS HIM PLACES AN' DOES LIKE HE DOES.
I MEAN THEY GO TO HEROGASM, THEY GO TO DOC PECULIAR'S... THEY EVEN FUCKIN' GIRLS TOGETHER, IF YOU CAN BELIEVE THAT SHIT...
WELL WHAT'S, WHAT'S, WHAT'S THIS GOT TO DO WI' WHAT'S GOIN' ON NOW--?
"GETTIN' THERE.
"WHAT NEARLY SETS SHIT OFF IS THE PHOTOS WIT' THE HOMELANDER KILLIN' THEM FOLKS. WE DON'T KNOW WHO SENT 'EM, BUT WE MAKE SURE HIM AN' VOUGHT GET COPIES THE VERY NEXT GODDAMN DAY.
"ALL WE DOIN'S FUCKIN' WIT' 'EM, SAYIN'--WE KNOW THE BIG SECRET, DON'T EVER GET TOO FUCKIN' AMBITIOUS. 'COURSE, BLACK NOIR COMES A CUNT HAIR FROM GETTIN' THE KILL ORDER THEN AN' THERE, BUT WE NEVER KNEW THAT AT THE TIME..."
WELL WHY DIDN'T THEY JUST GO AHEAD WITH IT?
MONEY AGAIN. HOMELANDER'S A WALKIN' FUCKIN' LICENSE TO PRINT IT.
THEY LOOK AT SHIT REAL HARD AN' DECIDE IT'S WORTH THE RISK. FAMILIES WERE IDENTIFIED FROM THE PICTURES; TURNED OUT THEY WENT MISSIN' SIX YEARS BEFORE. SO THIS GETS CALLED AN ISOLATED INCIDENT.

WELL THEY'RE EVIL FUCKERS, BUT...I STILL DON'T SEE...
YEAH.
THERE AIN'T MUCH ELSE IN BLACK NOIR'S FILE. ALL I COULD DO WAS THINK THROUGH WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT HIM. WHICH AIN'T MUCH.
JUST MORE QUESTIONS.
HOW DID HE SURVIVE FALLIN' FIVE GODDAMN MILES ON NINE-ELEVEN? HE AIN'T SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO FLY.
WHY WOULD HE DO THAT SHIT TO YOU AT HEROGASM, THEN NOT TELL THE RESTA THE SUPES WE THERE?
HOW CAN HE CUT A DUDE IN HALF AN' WRECK A PLANE AN' WALK AWAY ON FIRE, AN' NOT EVEN FUCKIN' REACT TO THAT SHIT? 'CAUSE THAT'S WHAT THE REPORT ON IT SAYS, NO SIGNS OF DURESS EXHIBITED WHATSOEVER.
AN' I THOUGHT ABOUT IT. AN' THOUGHT ABOUT IT.
AN' I WONDERED...WHAT IF THE HOMELANDER WASN'T EVER THE ONE THAT NEEDED WATCHIN'?
NO...NO, THAT...
I MEAN WHAT HE WAS DOIN' FROM THE START, EVEN WHEN HE WAS BORN...!
NO. JUST THINK ABOUT A ONE-MINUTE OLD BABY WITH SUPERPOWERS.
NOW TRY THIS: YOU'RE BLACK NOIR, YOU GOT ONE JOB TO DO AN' ONE JOB ONLY, ONE SINGLE FUCKIN' REASON TO BE ALIVE.

"AN' IT LOOKS LIKE THE SON OF A BITCH AIN'T NEVER GONNA OBLIGE YOU.
"IS IT POSSIBLE...JUST POSSIBLE...THAT YOU MIGHT DO SOMETHIN' TO TRY AN' MAKE IT HAPPEN?
"IS THERE SOME WEIRD FUCKED-UP CORNER A' YOUR MIND WHERE YOU CAN MAKE THAT SHIT MAKE SENSE?"
WAIT A MINUTE, HE'D HAVE TO BE COMPLETELY FUCKIN' INSANE--!
HE'S SITTIN' ON THE KINDA POWER MEANS YOU CAN BENCH A DOZEN MACK TRUCKS, AN' HE CAN'T USE IT. HE'S A ASSASSIN LIVIN' WIT' HIS TARGET. PERMANENTLY.
THAT BE ENOUGH TO GET HIM THERE?
I MEAN SHIT, HUGHIE, HE'S A FUCKIN' SUPE--IT AIN'T EXACTLY LIKE IT NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE. NOW MAYBE HE WENT CRAZY 'CAUSE A' THE JOB THEY GAVE HIM, MAYBE HE WAS LIKE THAT ALL ALONG--LIKE THEY FUCKED UP THE D.N.A. RIGHT AT THE--
NO-NO-NO-NO-NO, HANG ON, THIS CAN'T BE RIGHT! IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER BLACK NOIR'S MENTAL OR NOT, THE HOMELANDER DEFINITELY IS!
THERE'S WHAT HE'S DOIN' IN THE PHOTOS--FOR FUCK'S SAKE, THERE'S WHAT HE DID TO BUTCHER'S--
YEAH.
IS THERE?

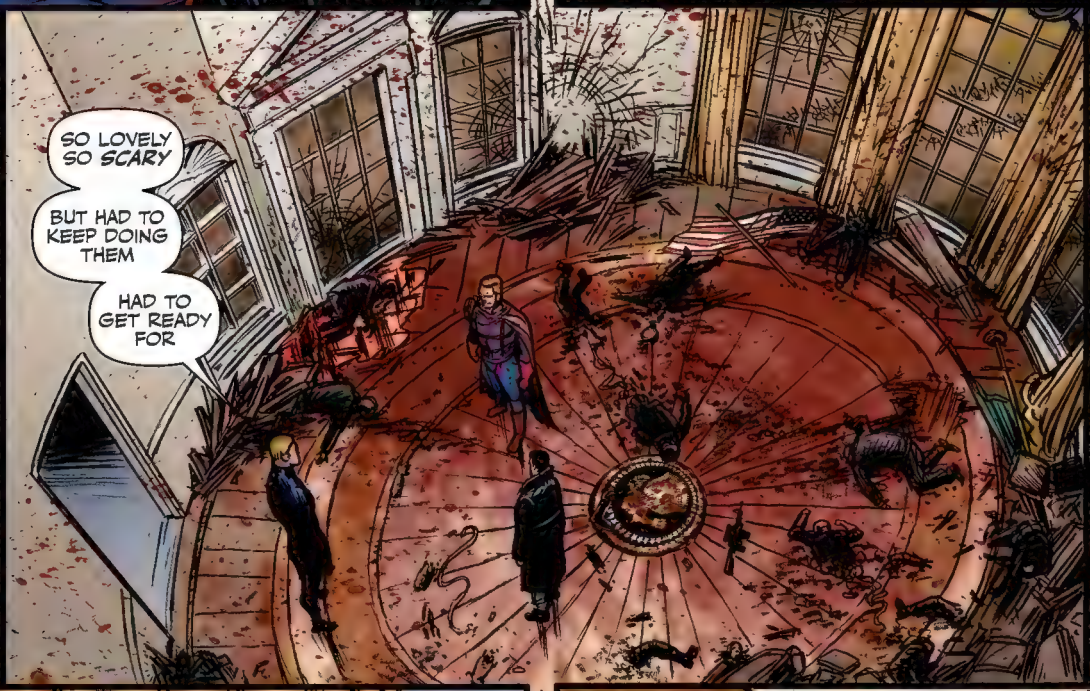
HL: She'll never know, she won't figure it out until afterwards. We're the same size and everything, it's just too fucking good to be true. It's going to be hilarious.

Okay, I'll take the heavy breathing as a yes. I'll see you soon. Third from the front on the east side. Don't fuck it up or we'll never get another shot.

HHEEEEENNNNHH
HHEEEEENNNNHH
I DID THINGS
YOU...
YOU'RE...
I PUT ON YOUR SILLY SUIT AND I
DID THINGS

...YEAH.
YOU FUCKIN' DID, DIDN'T YOU?
HHEEENNNHH
SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST THAT

SO MANY THINGS THEY'LL NEVER KNOW
LOVELY THINGS I LIKED SO MUCH


SO LOVELY SO SCARY
BUT HAD TO KEEP DOING THEM
HAD TO GET READY FOR

THE BIG ONE
OH MY GOD.
IT WAS YOU.

IT WAS YOU IN THOSE FUCKING--
HHEENNNHHHH
I TOOK THEM

CLICK CLICK
CLICK CLICK
I TOOK THEM
WHY, FOR FUCK'S SAKE...?
TOLD ME
TO KILL YOU
BUT THEY WOULDN'T LET ME DO IT WOULDN'T SAY DO IT WOULDN'T SAY
SO LONELY
SO SCARED
SO EXCITED
FOR SO LONG
GOT THE LITTLE PEOPLE GOT YOUR SILLY SUIT GOT MY CAMERA
THEN I GOT MY PICTURES BUT IT'S SCARY
SO BIG SO SCARY
KEEP MY PICTURES KEEP THEM THEN WE HEAR ABOUT
HIM
SEND HIM MY PICTURES
HE KNOWS WHAT TO DO
HHEEEEENNNHHH

OH JESUS
WHAT HAVE I DONE
ARE YOU SCARED?
OF THE NOTION, BY ANY SANE MEASURE OF REALITY--
THAT YOU'VE DONE SOMETHING CATASTROPHIC?
WHY CAN'T I DO THE THINGS I CAN DO...?
I WAS ALWAYS TERRIFIED... BECAUSE I WASN'T...
I'D NEVER HAVE DONE ANY OF THIS IF I DIDN'T THINK I'D ALREADY--
IF THAT WASN'T ME IN THE--
OH JESUS CHRIST ALMIGHTY.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS?
IT MEANS YOU TURNED INTO A FUCKIN' PSYCHOPATH BY MISTAKE.

JESUS FUCKIN' CHRIST!!
WATCH IT, YOU STUPID SHIT--!
MOVE, MOVE! OUTTA THE WAY!
OUTTA THE FUCKIN' WAY!
NO!!

AN' FUCK. THEM. UP.
GOT TONE. GOT A LOCK.
ARCHER LEADER, FOX THREE.
OKAY, JUST CHILL. LET THEM COME TO US.
WE TOO SMALL FOR THEM TO PAINT US ON RADAR, JUST DUCK WHATEVER THEY THROW AT US AN' THEN GET IN AMONGST 'EM.
FOX THREE.
FOX THREE.
FOX THREE.
FOX THREE.
FOX THREE.
FOX THREE.
FOX THREE.

YOU FUCKING FUCKING FUCK YOU FUCKED MY LIFE!!!
FUCK ME--
JESUS!

HEY--!
FUCK!

LOOK TO YER FRONT! LOOK TO YER FRONT!

YOU'RE GONNA HAVE A TARGET ANY SECOND, BOYS, SO GET FUCKIN' READY!

LISTEN, I'M JUST OFF THE PHONE WITH M.M! BLACK NOIR'S--
THE SPIT O' THE HOMELANDER AN' HE'S THE ONE DONE IT ALL. YEAH.

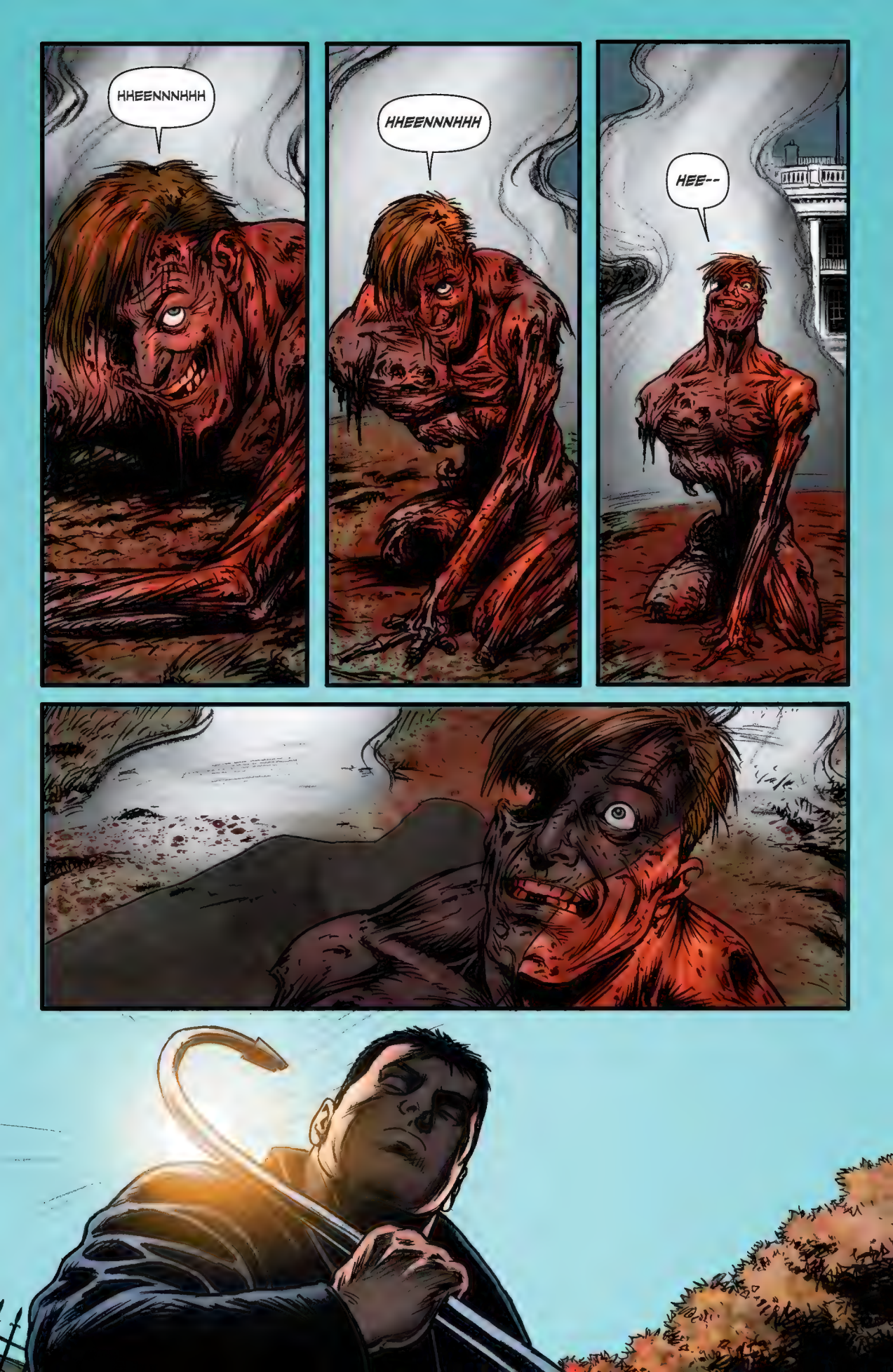
HOW...?
RIGHT, SHIFT YER ARSE THERE, MATE.
DUDE, ARE YOU LIKE ENGLISH OR SOMETHING--?
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT, DUDE.
I'M LIKE ENGLISH.

OH, FUCK, I DON'T LIKE THE LOOK OF THAT...!
SHOULD WE HEAD OVER THERE? LIKE MAYBE HELP?
AFTER YOU...
COWARDS--!
WHY DON'T THEY FACE US?!
FACE US!!
WHAT?
YOGI LEADER, ROLLING IN.

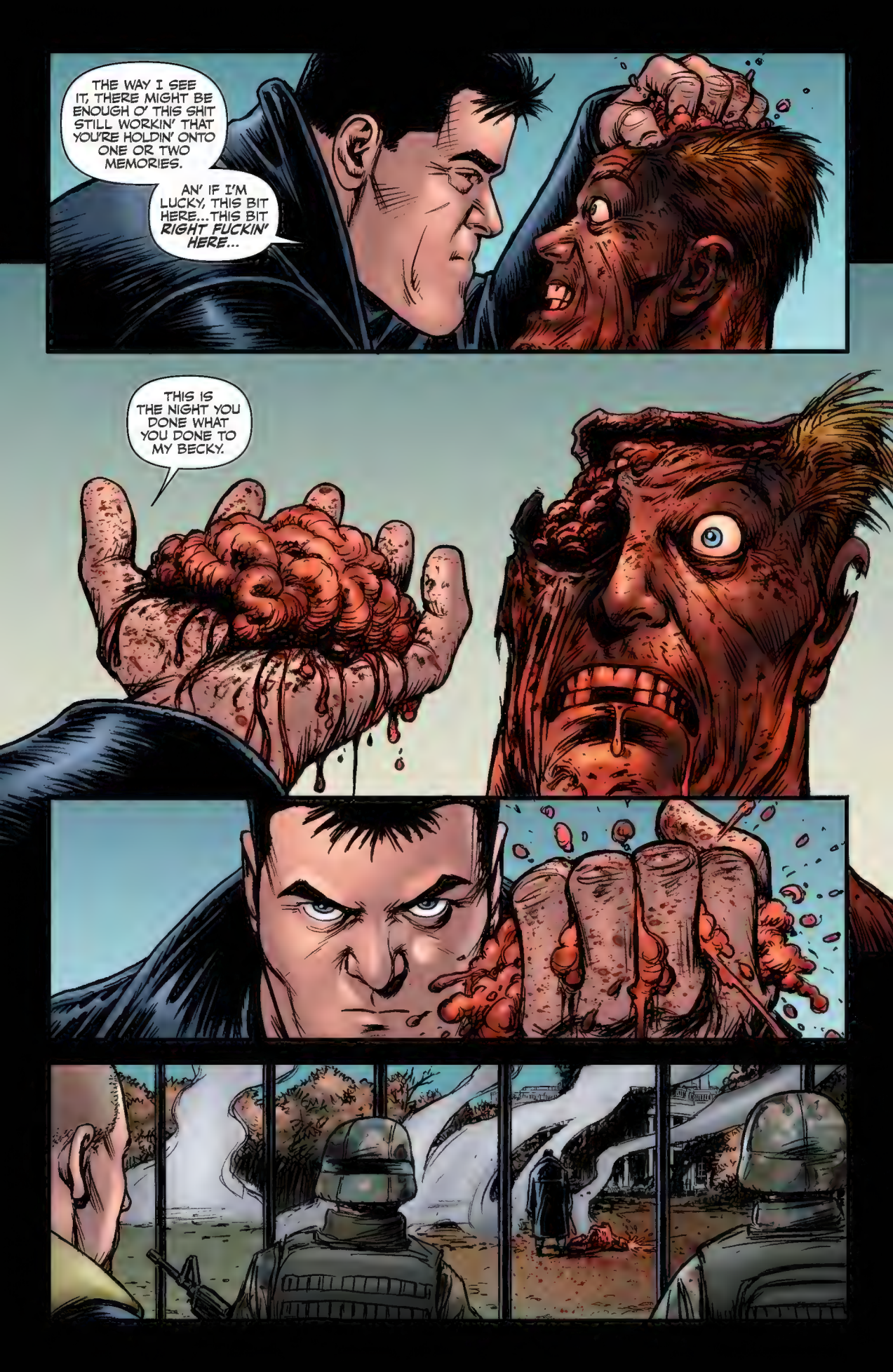
COME ON, MARINES! POUR IT ON!
BODYBAG THE MOTHERFUCKER!!
SIR?

YOU GOTTA BE FUCKING KIDDING ME.
COME ON, MARINES! POUR IT ON!
HHEEENNNHHHH
HHEEENNNHHHH

OH MY FUCKING GOD--!
RUN!!
AH, TARGETS LOOK TO BE DISENGAGING, HEADED STRAIGHT FOR THE POTOMAC--
AAAAAAAHH!!
SUPE SOUP.
BIG DADDY AND BUFFALO SQUADRONS, GET SOME WHILE YOU CAN.


HHEENNNHHH
HHEENNNHHH
HEE--

MMF--
YOU KNOW...
I'M ALWAYS TELLIN' PEOPLE NOT TO MAKE A SONG AN' DANCE AT TIMES LIKE THIS.
BUT HERE WE ARE AFTER ALL THESE FUCKIN' YEARS.


THE WAY I SEE IT, THERE MIGHT BE ENOUGH O' THIS SHIT STILL WORKIN' THAT YOU'RE HOLDIN' ONTO ONE OR TWO MEMORIES.
AN' IF I'M LUCKY, THIS BIT HERE...THIS BIT RIGHT FUCKIN' HERE...
THIS IS THE NIGHT YOU DONE WHAT YOU DONE TO MY BECKY.

AH, JOE STEPHENS AND HIS PEOPLE JUST MADE IT THROUGH TO THE PENTAGON, SIR, THEY WANT TO KNOW IF WE'RE TAKING PRISONERS?
HUH.
NOW THAT IS A GOOD QUESTION.
GIVE US A MINUTE HERE, WILL YOU, MATE?
AYE...
SURE.

OH, BECKY.
I'M SORRY, LOVE.
THAT AIN'T WHAT YOU WOULD'VE WANTED AT ALL.
THAT WAS A HUNDRED PERCENT ME, YOU WOULD'VE HATED WHAT I'VE DONE WITH ME LIFE.
AN' WHAT I'M GONNA DO NEXT--
YOU'D HATE THAT MOST OF ALL.
THE END

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The BOYS™

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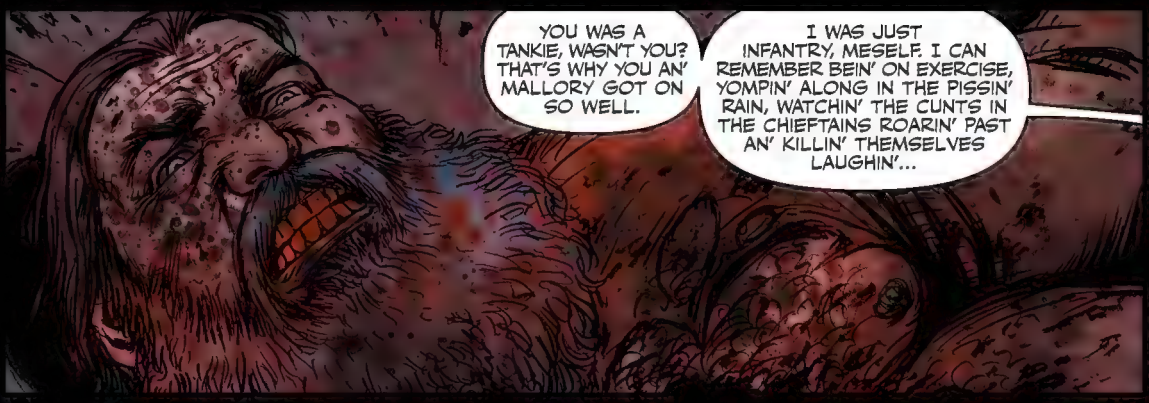
D'YOU KNOW THE PROBLEM WITH D.U. AMMO, VAS?
I MEAN FUCK KNOWS IT'S USEFUL STUFF, I DOUBT THAT BARNEY AT THE WHITE HOUSE WOULD'VE GONE QUITE AS WELL WITHOUT IT. D-38 PENETRATORS'LL GO THROUGH ALMOST ANYTHIN'.
BUT...
WELL, HOW DEPLETED IS DEPLETED, REALLY? ALL THESE LADS COMIN' BACK FROM PAKISTAN WITH THEIR BALLS ROTTIN' OFF, D'YOU THINK THERE MIGHT BE A CONNECTION THERE?
HANDLIN' IT... LOADIN' IT...WALKIN' THROUGH THE PLACES AFTER THE BOMBS AN' SHELLS'VE GONE OFF, MAYBE EVEN PICKIN' UP THE BODIES...
HHRRRGGGHH...!

HNNGH--
YOU MIGHT SAY IT'S AS BAD FOR THE BLOKE DONE THE SHOOTIN' AS THE POOR SOD HE SHOT.
NNNNNGGGHH--
WORSE, EVEN, CONSIDERIN' HOW LONG THE SHITE TAKES TO FINISH YOU OFF.
NOT THAT THAT'S GONNA BE A PROBLEM IN MY CASE. BUT IT MAKES YOU THINK.
NAAAAH, BILLY, I CANNOT LET YOU DO THIS...!
WRONG AGAIN, ME OL' SON.
HAVE A DEKKO UP THERE.
WHAT THE FUCK YOU DOIN' TRYNNA HIDE HIM IN HERE, ANYWAY? D'YOU THINK I'M ARNIE SCHWARZENEGGER AN' IT'S GONNA BOLLOCKS UP ME SENSORS?
MAKES SENSE HIM GOIN' TO YOU. I MEAN IT'S A CRYIN' SHAME, BUT AT LEAST I KNEW TO COME PREPARED.

AAAAAAAAAAAAHH!!!

AAAH--
AAAAAHH--!
FUCKIN' HELL, MATE, THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO FINISH YOU OFF...!

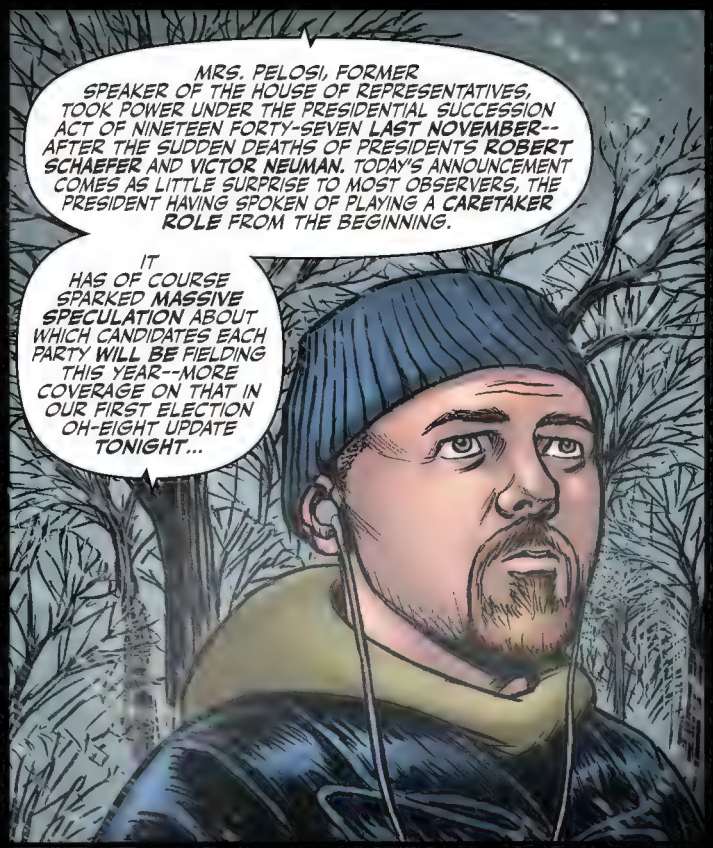

YOU WAS A TANKIE, WASN'T YOU? THAT'S WHY YOU AN' MALLORY GOT ON SO WELL.
I WAS JUST INFANTRY, MESELF. I CAN REMEMBER BEIN' ON EXERCISE, YOMPIN' ALONG IN THE PISSIN' RAIN, WATCHIN' THE CUNTS IN THE CHIEFTAINS ROARIN' PAST AN' KILLIN' THEMSELVES LAUGHIN'...

HOW D'YOU KNOCK OUT A TANK THEN, VAS?
EASY.

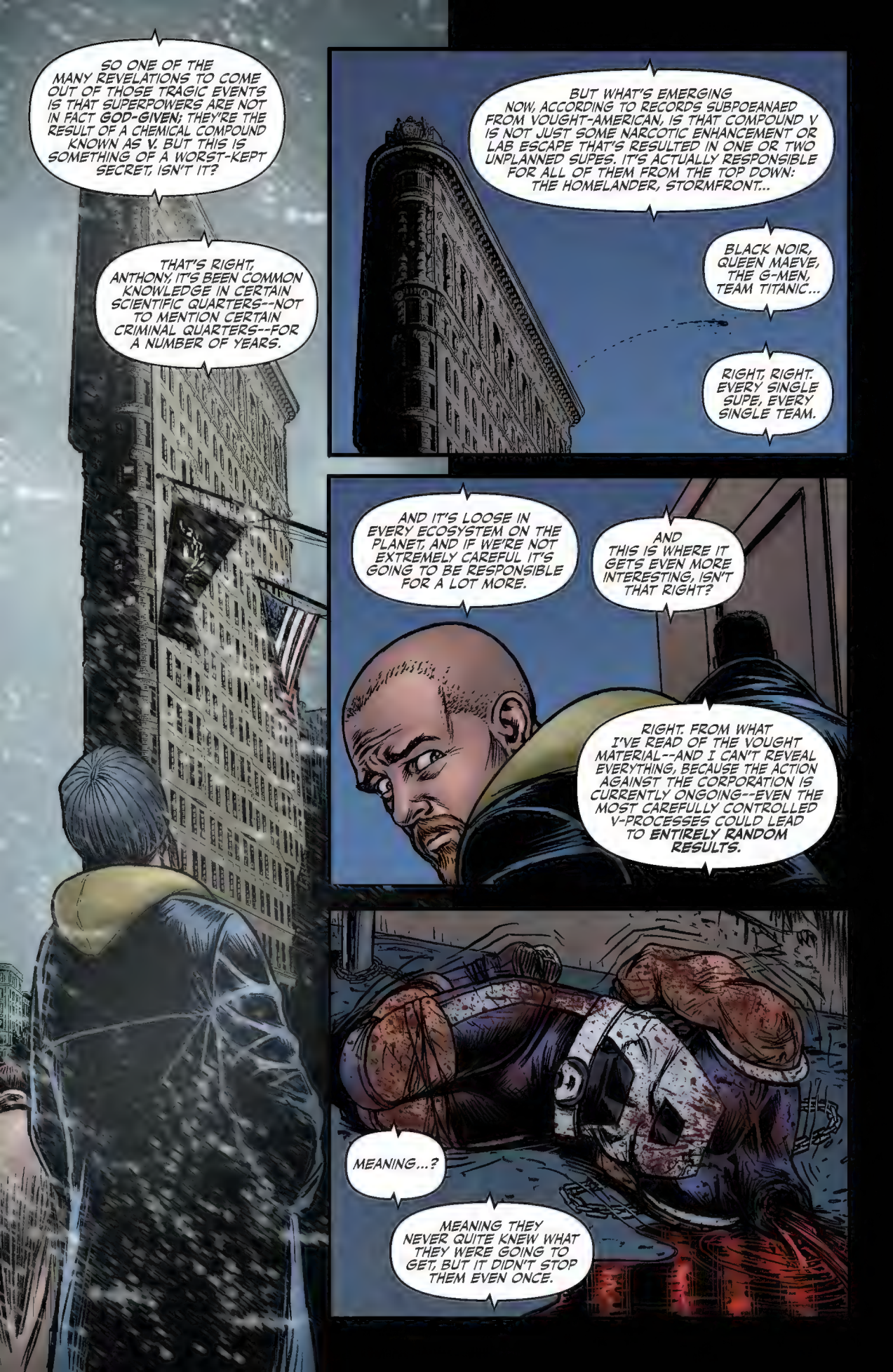
THE BLOODY DOORS OFF

part one

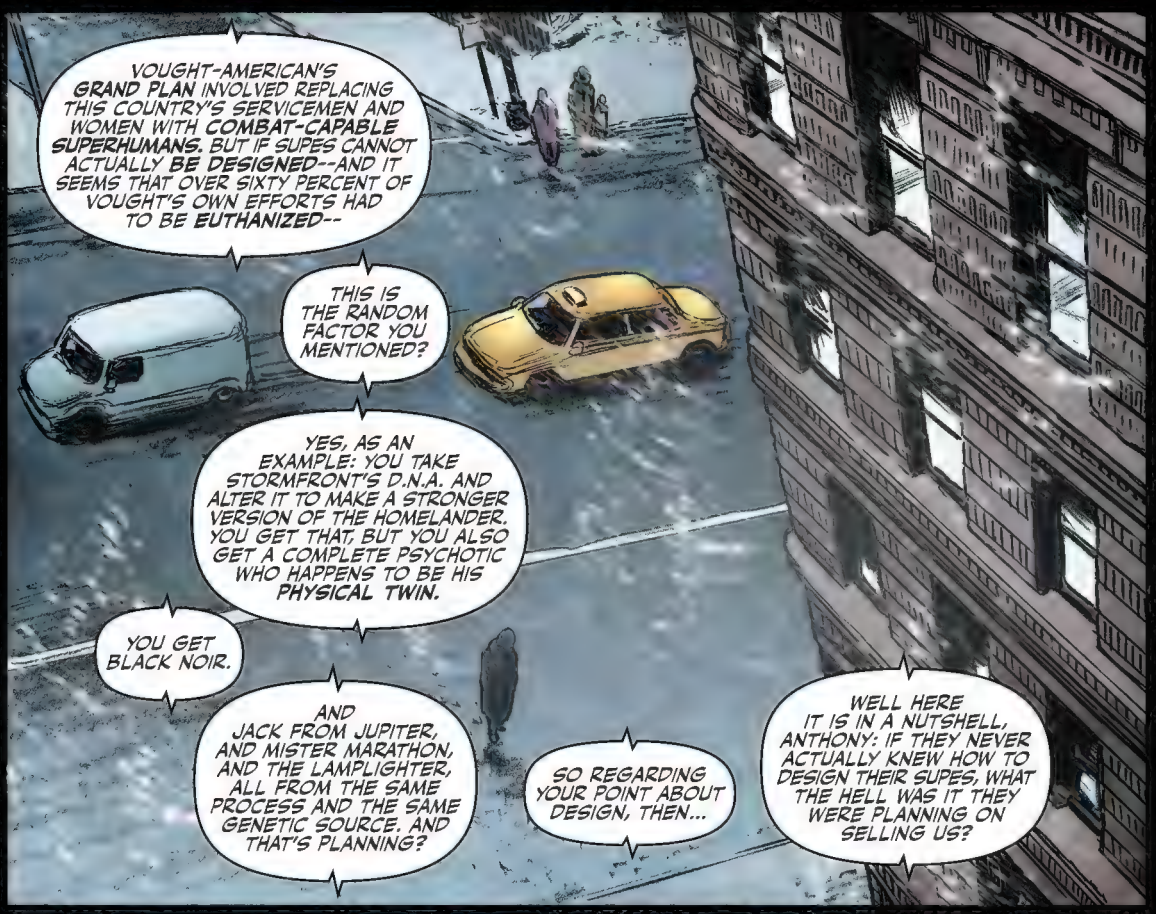
...TOP STORY AGAIN, PRESIDENT NANCY PELOSI HAS SAID SHE HAS NO DESIRE TO SEEK HER PARTY'S OFFICIAL NOMINATION, AND THAT HER ADMINISTRATION WILL REMAIN A PURELY TRANSITIONAL ONE...


MRS. PELOSI, FORMER SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, TOOK POWER UNDER THE PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION ACT OF NINETEEN FORTY-SEVEN LAST NOVEMBER--AFTER THE SUDDEN DEATHS OF PRESIDENTS ROBERT SCHAEFER AND VICTOR NEUMAN. TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT COMES AS LITTLE SURPRISE TO MOST OBSERVERS, THE PRESIDENT HAVING SPOKEN OF PLAYING A CARETAKER ROLE FROM THE BEGINNING.
IT HAS OF COURSE SPARKED MASSIVE SPECULATION ABOUT WHICH CANDIDATES EACH PARTY WILL BE FIELDING THIS YEAR--MORE COVERAGE ON THAT IN OUR FIRST ELECTION OH-EIGHT UPDATE TONIGHT...

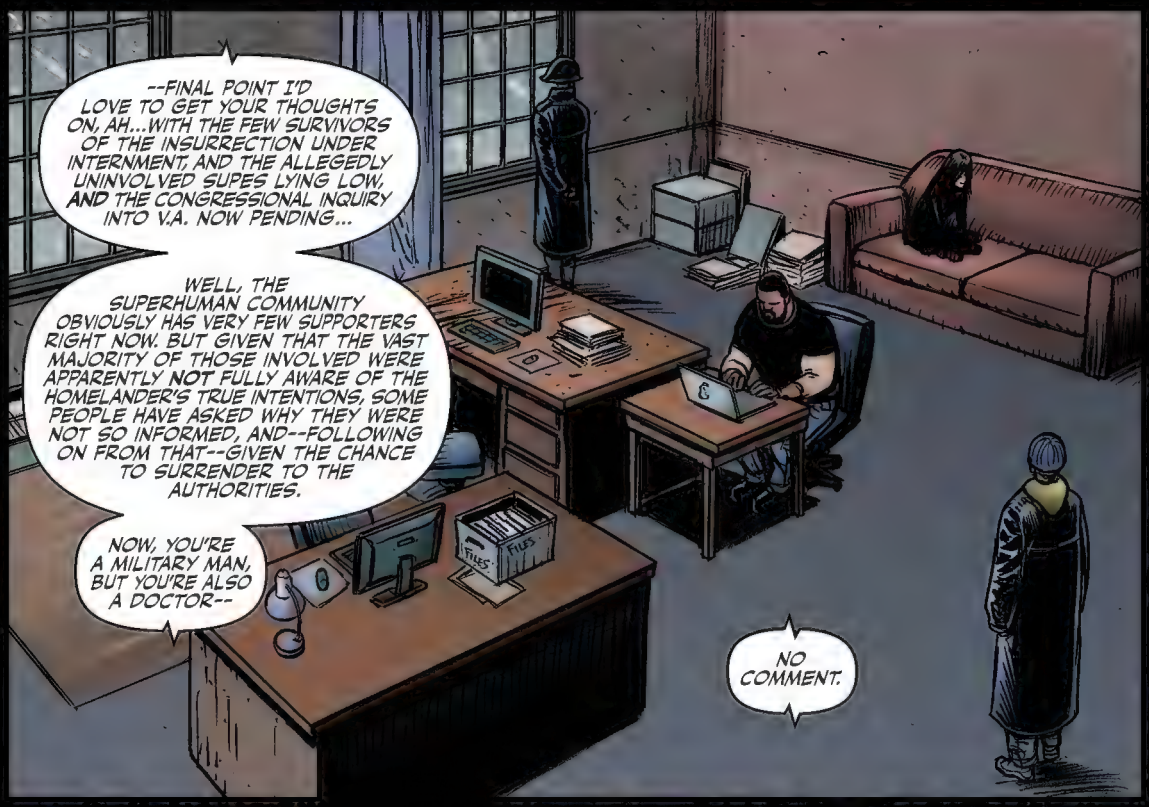
RIGHT NOW, WITH THE TIME COMING UP TO TEN A.M., WE'D LIKE TO WELCOME TO THE STUDIO VICE-ADMIRAL DONALD FOLTZ--FORMER SURGEON GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY, WHO'S HERE WITH SOME INSIGHTS INTO LAST YEAR'S CATACLYSMIC SUPERHUMAN MELTDOWN. VICE-ADMIRAL FOLTZ, GOOD MORNING.
GOOD MORNING, ANTHONY. THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME ON THE SHOW.


SO ONE OF THE MANY REVELATIONS TO COME OUT OF THOSE TRAGIC EVENTS IS THAT SUPERPOWERS ARE NOT IN FACT GOD-GIVEN; THEY'RE THE RESULT OF A CHEMICAL COMPOUND KNOWN AS V. BUT THIS IS SOMETHING OF A WORST-KEPT SECRET, ISN'T IT?
THAT'S RIGHT, ANTHONY, IT'S BEEN COMMON KNOWLEDGE IN CERTAIN SCIENTIFIC QUARTERS--NOT TO MENTION CERTAIN CRIMINAL QUARTERS--FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS.
BUT WHAT'S EMERGING NOW, ACCORDING TO RECORDS SUBPOEANAED FROM VOUGHT-AMERICAN, IS THAT COMPOUND V IS NOT JUST SOME NARCOTIC ENHANCEMENT OR LAB ESCAPE THAT'S RESULTED IN ONE OR TWO UNPLANNED SUPES. IT'S ACTUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF THEM FROM THE TOP DOWN: THE HOMELANDER, STORMFRONT...
BLACK NOIR, QUEEN MAEVE, THE G-MEN, TEAM TITANIC...
RIGHT, RIGHT. EVERY SINGLE SUPE, EVERY SINGLE TEAM.
AND IT'S LOOSE IN EVERY ECOSYSTEM ON THE PLANET, AND IF WE'RE NOT EXTREMELY CAREFUL IT'S GOING TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR A LOT MORE.
AND THIS IS WHERE IT GETS EVEN MORE INTERESTING, ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
RIGHT. FROM WHAT I'VE READ OF THE VOUGHT MATERIAL--AND I CAN'T REVEAL EVERYTHING, BECAUSE THE ACTION AGAINST THE CORPORATION IS CURRENTLY ONGOING--EVEN THE MOST CAREFULLY CONTROLLED V-PROCESSES COULD LEAD TO ENTIRELY RANDOM RESULTS.
MEANING...?
MEANING THEY NEVER QUITE KNEW WHAT THEY WERE GOING TO GET, BUT IT DIDN'T STOP THEM EVEN ONCE.

AND YOU HAVE SOME QUITE SPECIFIC CONCERNS ABOUT THAT, CORRECT?
I DO INDEED.


VOUGHT-AMERICAN'S GRAND PLAN INVOLVED REPLACING THIS COUNTRY'S SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN WITH COMBAT-CAPABLE SUPERHUMANS. BUT IF SUPES CANNOT ACTUALLY BE DESIGNED--AND IT SEEMS THAT OVER SIXTY PERCENT OF VOUGHT'S OWN EFFORTS HAD TO BE EUTHANIZED--
THIS IS THE RANDOM FACTOR YOU MENTIONED?
YES, AS AN EXAMPLE: YOU TAKE STORMFRONT'S D.N.A. AND ALTER IT TO MAKE A STRONGER VERSION OF THE HOMELANDER. YOU GET THAT, BUT YOU ALSO GET A COMPLETE PSYCHOTIC WHO HAPPENS TO BE HIS PHYSICAL TWIN.
YOU GET BLACK NOIR.
AND JACK FROM JUPITER, AND MISTER MARATHON, AND THE LAMPLIGHTER, ALL FROM THE SAME PROCESS AND THE SAME GENETIC SOURCE. AND THAT'S PLANNING?
SO REGARDING YOUR POINT ABOUT DESIGN, THEN...
WELL HERE IT IS IN A NUTSHELL, ANTHONY: IF THEY NEVER ACTUALLY KNEW HOW TO DESIGN THEIR SUPES, WHAT THE HELL WAS IT THEY WERE PLANNING ON SELLING US?

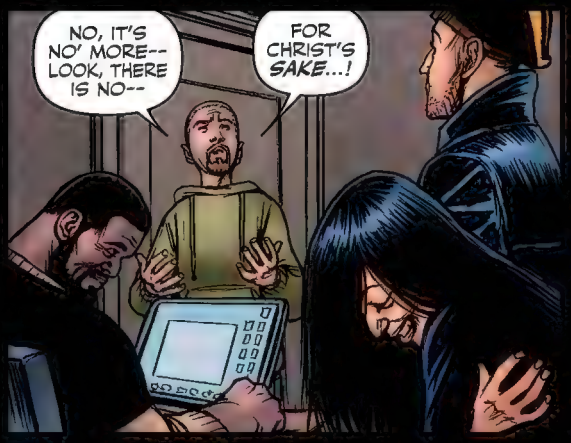
AH, THAT'S A REALLY INTERESTING QUESTION, DO YOU...?
LET'S JUST SAY IT WOULDN'T'VE BEEN THE FIRST TIME THESE PEOPLE HAD RIPPED OFF UNCLE SAM. TRY GOOGLING VOUGHT-AMERICAN-CONSOLIDATED, M-20, AND F7U...


--FINAL POINT I'D LOVE TO GET YOUR THOUGHTS ON, AH...WITH THE FEW SURVIVORS OF THE INSURRECTION UNDER INTERNMENT, AND THE ALLEGEDLY UNINVOLVED SUPES LYING LOW, AND THE CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY INTO V.A. NOW PENDING...
WELL, THE SUPERHUMAN COMMUNITY OBVIOUSLY HAS VERY FEW SUPPORTERS RIGHT NOW. BUT GIVEN THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF THOSE INVOLVED WERE APPARENTLY NOT FULLY AWARE OF THE HOMELANDER'S TRUE INTENTIONS, SOME PEOPLE HAVE ASKED WHY THEY WERE NOT SO INFORMED, AND--FOLLOWING ON FROM THAT--GIVEN THE CHANCE TO SURRENDER TO THE AUTHORITIES.
NOW, YOU'RE A MILITARY MAN, BUT YOU'RE ALSO A DOCTOR--
FILES
FILES
NO COMMENT.

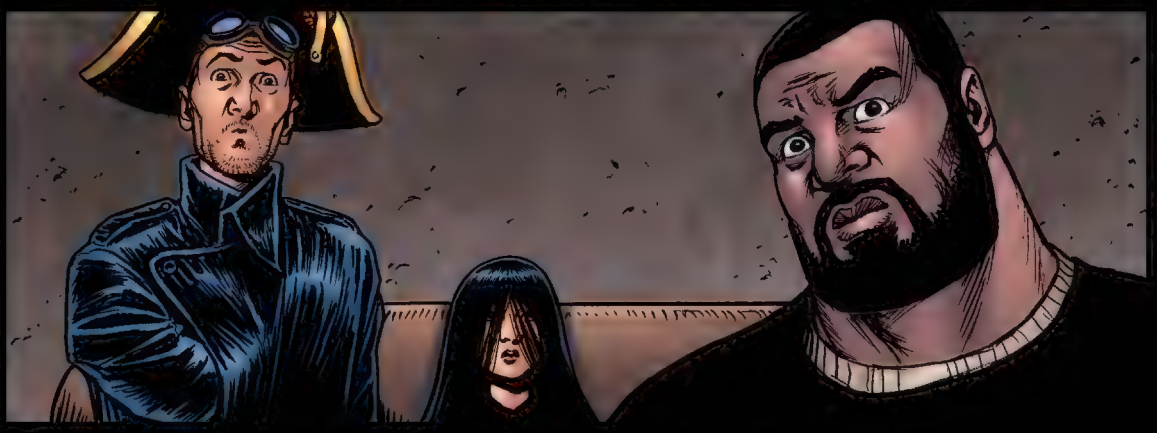
OKAY, BECAUSE THERE HAS BEEN A SUGGESTION THAT A LESSON WAS--
BUT NICE TRY, ANTHONY. THANK YOU.
UM...CAN I'VE A WORD FOR A SECOND, BOYS?

FUCKSAKE. HE WOULDN'T EVEN'VE HAD TO TALK.
BOYS, I THINK OUR JOB HERE'S OVER AN' DONE WI'. I THINK IT'S TIME WE QUIT.

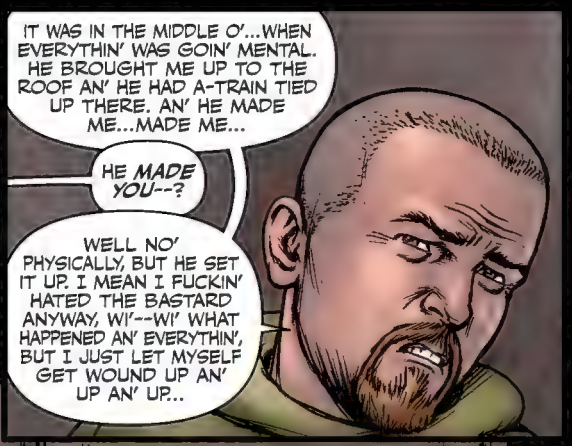
UH-HUH.
KIND OF A COINCIDENCE, HUGHIE. WE BEEN SAYIN' THE SAME THING.
OH AYE?
I GOT FAMILY SHIT I CAN'T BE PUTTIN' OFF NO MORE. BARELY KNOW WHERE TO START, BUT I GOTTA.
AND I--I HAVE BEEN BATTLING EVERY FRENCHMAN'S BURDEN: THE SPECTRE OF ENNUI, THAT STALKS MY EVERY WAKING CHEESE...
P.T.S.D.
ALSO, LA FEMME HAS BEEN SMILING AGAIN. GIGGLING, EVEN, EVER SINCE PETIT HUGHIE'S REVELATION DE MASTURBATION.
I BELIEVE SUCH MERRIMENT MIGHT MEAN NEW HOPE. I THINK WE OWE HER SUCH A CHANCE, HOWEVER SMALL.
SOMETHING TO BE EXPLORED FURTHER...FAR, FAR FROM HERE.
WELL THAT'S, UH, THAT'S BRILLIANT, HEN. I'M REALLY HAPPY I COULD BE PARTA YER...YER BREAKTHROUGH...
AND WHAT OF YOU, PETIT HUGHIE? IS IT MORE WANKING TIME?

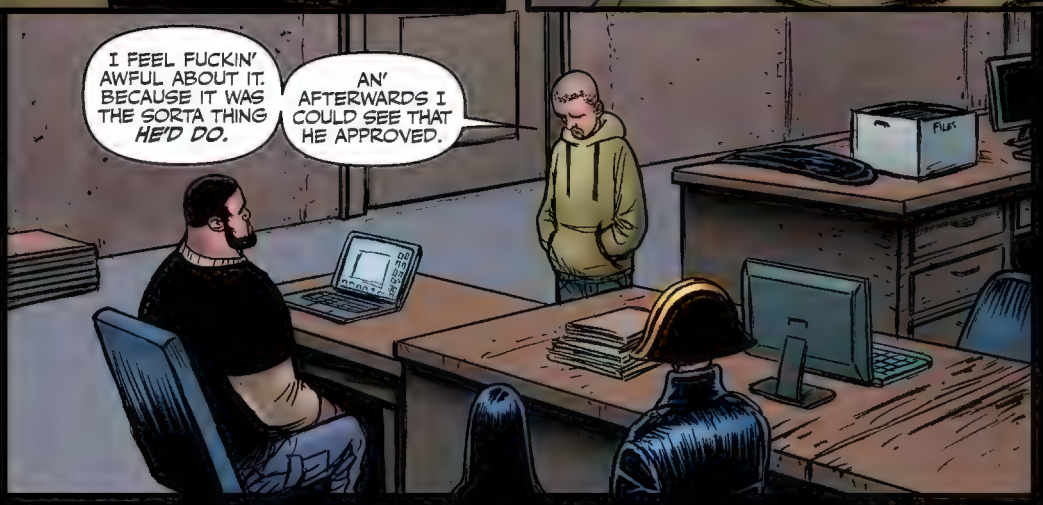

NO, IT'S NO' MORE-- LOOK, THERE IS NO--
FOR CHRIST'S SAKE...!

IT'S... THE THING I HAVE ABOUT VIOLENCE, JUST.
I KEN YOU KEN, YOU'VE HEARD ME GO ON AN' ON ABOUT IT. I'M NO' GONNA START WHINGEIN' AGAIN NOW. BUT...
ALL RIGHT, HE TOLD YOU I KILLED A-TRAIN, AYE?



HE DIDN'T?
AW, FUCK ME.
WHEN THE FUCK YOU KILL A-TRAIN?

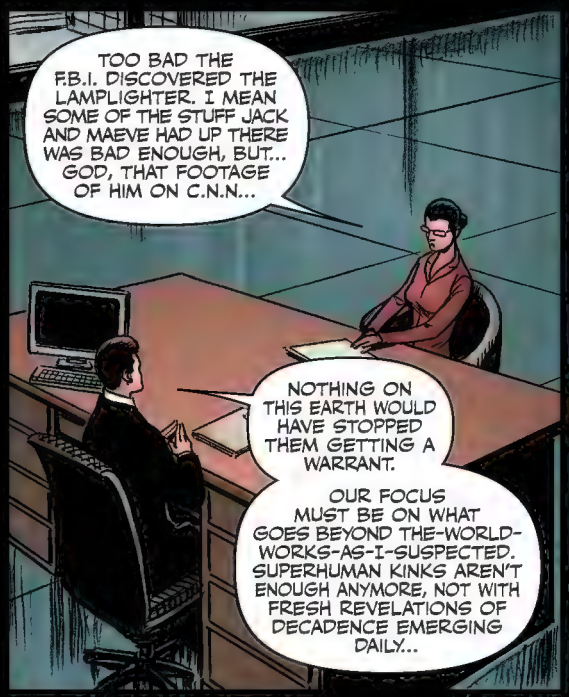

IT WAS IN THE MIDDLE O'...WHEN EVERYTHIN' WAS GOIN' MENTAL. HE BROUGHT ME UP TO THE ROOF AN' HE HAD A-TRAIN TIED UP THERE. AN' HE MADE ME...MADE ME...
HE MADE YOU--?
WELL NO' PHYSICALLY, BUT HE SET IT UP. I MEAN I FUCKIN' HATED THE BASTARD ANYWAY, WI'--WI' WHAT HAPPENED AN' EVERYTHIN', BUT I JUST LET MYSELF GET WOUND UP AN' UP AN' UP...


I FEEL FUCKIN' AWFUL ABOUT IT. BECAUSE IT WAS THE SORTA THING HE'D DO.
AN' AFTERWARDS I COULD SEE THAT HE APPROVED.

AN' THAT'S THE WEIRD THING. HE SAID HE DID IT TO TOUGHEN ME UP--BUT IN THE END HE WOULDN'T LET ME DO ANYTHIN'.
HE WENT IN AFTER THE HOMELANDER ALL ON HIS OWN, AN' HE FINISHED BLACK NOIR OFF BY HIMSELF TOO. ALL I DID WAS STAND AN' BLOODY WATCH...
YEAH.
I DUNNO WHAT THE FUCK HE WAS THINKIN' WIT' A-TRAIN. COULD BE HE FIGURED HE OWED YOU THAT, BEIN' IT'S WHAT GOT YOU INVOLVED INNA FIRST PLACE.
BUT THE POINT IS, HE DONE THE SHIT HE HAD TO DO. THE MUTHAFUCKERS'RE DEAD. AN' WE THROUGH TOO, VOUGHT AIN'T CLIMBIN' OUT OF A HOLE THIS GODDAMN BIG.
WE ALL DONE, PEOPLE.
TIME WE WENT THE FUCK HOME.
OUI.
WHO WILL INFORM M'SIEU CHARCUTER?

...HANG US OUT TO DRY FOR WHAT IS, IN ESSENCE, THE KIND OF AGGRESSIVE BUSINESS PRACTICE THAT'S BECOME COMMONPLACE. THAT EVERYONE GETS AWAY WITH ALL THE TIME.
MAKE NO MISTAKE, THIS IS AN ASSAULT BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT: NOT JUST ON OUR MOST SUCCESSFUL DIVISION, BUT ON THE ENTIRE VOUGHT-AMERICAN FAMILY. WELL, WE ARE GOING TO FIGHT BACK--AND GET THROUGH THIS--AS A FAMILY.
THANK YOU.
THIS REMINDS ME OF THE DAY WE MET...
LESS CHAMPAGNE. MORE LEPROSY.
DREADFUL STYLE OF RHETORIC BREWSTER GOES IN FOR. YOU DON'T MENTION FAMILIES AND FIGHTING IN THE SAME SENTENCE, YOU TALK EITHER SHELTER OR DEFIANCE...
ALSO PATHETICALLY TRANSPARENT.
IF THESE CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS GO AS BADLY AS THEY'RE EXPECTED TO, YOU AND I WILL BE FLUNG TO THE WOLVES.
INDEED.

LET'S TAKE A CAREFUL LOOK AT WHERE WE ARE.
D'YOU MIND?
MI CASA, SU CASA.
GENERALLY, THE PUBLIC HAS A HIGH TOLERANCE FOR THE RELEASE OF SECRETS. FOR JARRING TRUTHS BEING THROWN IN ITS FACE.
TAKE WIKILEAKS. FOR OVER A YEAR NOW THEY'VE BEEN RELEASING ALL KINDS OF MATERIAL, YET WHETHER THROUGH APATHY OR IMPOTENCE THE MOST COMMON RESPONSE HAS BEEN--YES. THE WORLD WORKS THE WAY I ALWAYS SUSPECTED.
BUT THAT WON'T APPLY TO US. WE WENT TOO FAR.
WE...BROKE THROUGH SOME BARRIER, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF WHICH IS TOO MUCH HORROR FOR PEOPLE TO ABSORB.
WE ARE *PERCEIVED* AS HAVING DONE SO. WHY?
THE IDEA OF GROWING SUPERHUMANS--FOR MILITARY SERVICE OR ANYTHING ELSE--IS DISTURBING, BUT NOT ILLEGAL. IT WILL BE, NOW THAT IT'S PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, BUT HAD WE GONE AHEAD AS PLANNED WE WOULD HAVE BEEN ONE MORE DEFENSE CONTRACTOR SUBMITTING A TENDER.
AT THE MOMENT THERE IS NO ACTUAL CONNECTION BETWEEN OUR PLANS AND WHAT THE HOMELANDER DID, WE ARE SIMPLY BEING TARRED WITH THE SAME BRUSH. WE GENUINELY KNEW OF NOTHING AMISS.
DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: WE SUSPECTED.
SOLUTION: NEVER, EVER SAY SO AGAIN.
THE PICTURES?
GONE. WE NEVER SAW THEM.


TOO BAD THE F.B.I. DISCOVERED THE LAMPLIGHTER. I MEAN SOME OF THE STUFF JACK AND MAEVE HAD UP THERE WAS BAD ENOUGH, BUT... GOD, THAT FOOTAGE OF HIM ON C.N.N...
NOTHING ON THIS EARTH WOULD HAVE STOPPED THEM GETTING A WARRANT.
OUR FOCUS MUST BE ON WHAT GOES BEYOND THE-WORLD-WORKS-AS-I-SUSPECTED. SUPERHUMAN KINKS AREN'T ENOUGH ANYMORE, NOT WITH FRESH REVELATIONS OF DECADENCE EMERGING DAILY...

HOW ABOUT REANIMATED CORPSES?
IT ISN'T THE FIRST TIME THE LAMPLIGHTER'S WASHED UP ON AN AWKWARD SHORE. WE DEALT WITH HIM THEN AND WE'LL DEAL WITH HIM NOW: I SUSPECT THROUGH CAREFUL LEGAL ARGUMENT REGARDING THE WORD *REANIMATED.*
SHALL I TELL YOU OUR REAL CONCERN?

THE PRESIDENT...?
DENTS. PLURAL.
DAKOTA BOB, VIC THE VEEP, THE SECRET SERVICE, RED RIVER. THE ENTIRE UNDERTAKING--FORTUNATELY, AT LEAST FOR US--PRE-EMPTED BY AN EXOTIC PET AND ECLIPSED BY THE HOMELANDER'S EPIC INSANITY.
THAT WOULD GO BEYOND.

SO WHAT WE DID, WE KEEP SECRET. WHAT WE DIDN'T...YOU KNOW WHAT WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT?
GO ON.
THE MOST CREDIBLE WAY TO SAY TO CONGRESS: *WE NEVER KNEW.* IF WE CAN SEPARATE VOUGHT FROM THE INSURRECTION--AND WE HAVE THE TRUTH ON OUR SIDE THERE--THAT JUST LEAVES PUSHING SUPES ON THE MILITARY.
THE-WORLD-WORKS-AS-I-SUSPECTED.

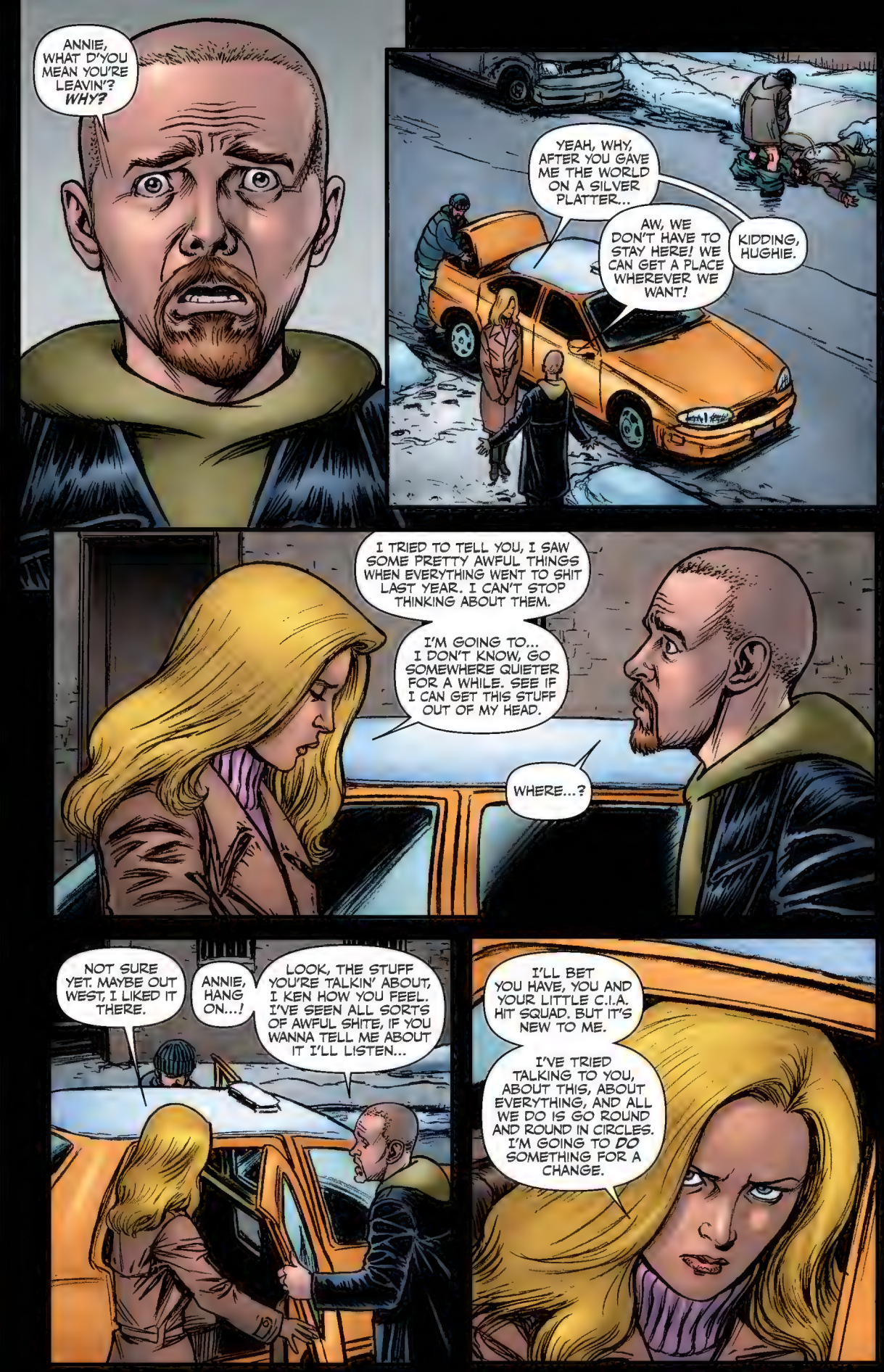
HMM.
I'M SURE WE CAN COME UP WITH SOMETHING TOGETHER.
I CAN'T IMAGINE A BETTER WAY.

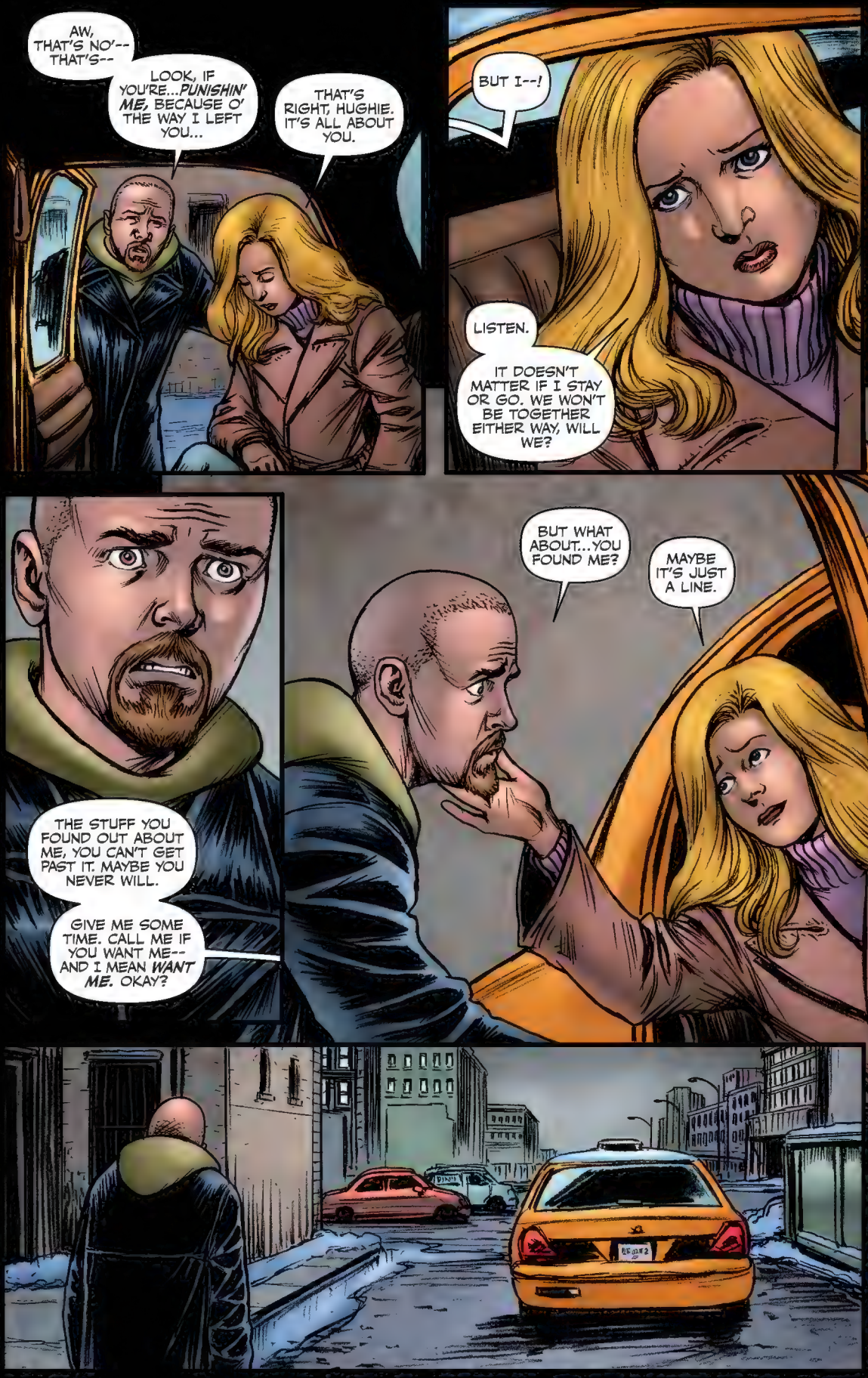
GOOD TRIP?
IF YOU LIKE THAT SORTA THING. MUCH OCCURRIN'?
YOU SAW THE EMAILS...
YEAH.
YOU GOT A MINUTE?
YEAH, 'COURSE. AS A MATTER O' FACT, THERE'S A COUPLA THINGS I WANTED TO MENTION TOO.
FIRST OF ALL, IT'S BLEEDIN' OBVIOUS THERE'S FUCK ALL TO DO AROUND HERE. I KNOW WE HAD ALL THAT BUMF TO PUT TOGETHER FOR RAYNER, BUT THE COMMITTEE'S GOT ITS START DATE AN' AS FAR AS WE'RE CONCERNED IT'S JOB DONE.
THE SUPES'LL STICK THEIR HEADS UP SOONER OR LATER. THERE'S A NEVERENDIN' SUPPLY O' THE CUNTS. BUT JUST FOR NOW, I THINK WE COULD DO WITH A BREATHER.
SO I'LL HOLD THE FORT HERE, AN' YOU LOT CAN HAVE THREE MONTHS OFF. HOW'S THAT SOUND?

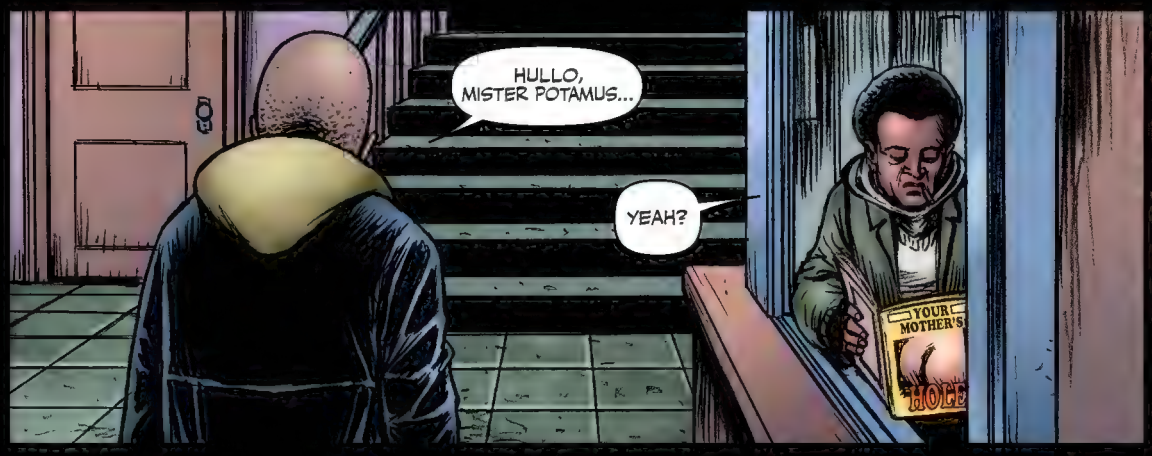
M'SIEU CHARCUTER...!
YOU SURE 'BOUT THIS?
YOU GONNA BE ALL RIGHT, LIKE, LIKE WI'--
THE OTHER THING-- MM--
THE OTHER THING IS WHEN WE DO COME BACK, HUGHIE'S GONNA BE TWO I/C.
CONGRATULATIONS, MY SON. YOU ARE NOW ENTITLED TO A FUNNY SALUTE FROM ALL CONCERNED AN' A HAT WITH A BIG FUCKIN' BELL ON IT.
TWO... WHAT...?
OH, SORRY, MATE. SECOND IN COMMAND.
YOU KNOW, LIKE YOU WANTED.
WHAT? NO! I NEVER--
WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT...?
WHAT AM I TALKIN' ABOUT? HUGHIE, YOU STOOD RIGHT THERE IN DOC PECULIAR'S, IT WAS JUST AFTER YOU COME BACK, AN' YOU TOLD ME THAT WAS WHAT YOU WERE AFTER. YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO BE INVOLVED IN THE DECISION-MAKIN', ALL THE WAY ON THE INSIDE.
SECOND IN COMMAND. AN N.C.O.. I SAID I'D THINK ABOUT IT.

OH, FUCK, I FORGOT ALL ABOUT THAT...!
I MEAN--
I--
I...
AW HEN, NO, LET ME EXPLAIN--!
I THINK YOU HAVE ALREADY DONE SO, PETIT HUGHIE...
YEAH, YOU ALL OVER THE MUTHAFUCKA.
SO WHAT WAS IT YOU WANTED TO TELL ME, THEN?
YOU KNOW HOW LONG I BEEN PARTA THIS? YOU SEE ME LOOKIN' FOR A GODDAMN BUMP UP?
BUT-- BUT--
SHIT, YOU OUGHTA KNOW, NUMBER A' TIMES YOU COME TO ME FOR ADVICE...
NO, NO, YOU DON'T GET IT, THINGS WERE DIFFERENT WHEN--
NO DOUBT THEY WERE...PETTY HUGHIE...
WHAT--?!
AW FRENCHIE, DON'T BE LIKE THAT! IT WAS STUPID, I JUST WASN'T THINKIN'!
OUI, MON COMMANDANT...
FRENCHIE...!
MAN--
WHAT THE FUCK?

YOU CAN'T SEE YERSELF SALUTIN' HUGHIE?
WH--
COME ON, I'M ONLY JOKIN'...
LOOK, HE WANTED IT SO I GAVE IT TO HIM. YOU KNOW WHAT HE'S LIKE, HE'S ALWAYS HAVIN' A WOBBLE ABOUT SOMETHIN'--I THOUGHT IF HE HAD THIS IT MIGHT SORT HIM OUT A BIT.
AN' LET'S FACE IT, IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S GONNA MEAN ANYTHIN'. WE'RE BOTH A BIT LONG OUTTA UNIFORM FOR THAT CHAIN O' COMMAND BOLLOCKS, AIN'T WE?
JUST CARRY ON DOIN' THE JOB YOUR WAY, YOU KNOW RESULTS SPEAK LOUDEST ROUND HERE.
IN THE MEANTIME--TAKE SOME TIME OFF, MATE. RELAX FOR A BIT. I MEAN WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SAW JANINE?
FRENCHIE. VOTRE DEAREST CHUM.
AW, DON'T DO THAT, FRENCHIE! DON'T!
LA FEMME. WHO FEEDS YOUR HAMSTER UP, THAT NO SUPE CAN USE HIM AS A BUTT-PLUG.
BUT I'M NO' GONNA SEE YOU FOR THREE MONTHS...!
LONGER, IF WE SEE YOU FIRST.
HAVE A NICE DAY, MON BRAVE.


ANNIE, WHAT D'YOU MEAN YOU'RE LEAVIN'? WHY?
YEAH, WHY, AFTER YOU GAVE ME THE WORLD ON A SILVER PLATTER...
AW, WE DON'T HAVE TO STAY HERE! WE CAN GET A PLACE WHEREVER WE WANT!
KIDDING, HUGHIE.
I TRIED TO TELL YOU, I SAW SOME PRETTY AWFUL THINGS WHEN EVERYTHING WENT TO SHIT LAST YEAR. I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT THEM.
I'M GOING TO... I DON'T KNOW, GO SOMEWHERE QUIETER FOR A WHILE. SEE IF I CAN GET THIS STUFF OUT OF MY HEAD.
WHERE...?
NOT SURE YET. MAYBE OUT WEST, I LIKED IT THERE.
ANNIE, HANG ON...!
LOOK, THE STUFF YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT, I KEN HOW YOU FEEL. I'VE SEEN ALL SORTS OF AWFUL SHITE, IF YOU WANNA TELL ME ABOUT IT I'LL LISTEN...
I'LL BET YOU HAVE, YOU AND YOUR LITTLE C.I.A. HIT SQUAD. BUT IT'S NEW TO ME.
I'VE TRIED TALKING TO YOU, ABOUT THIS, ABOUT EVERYTHING, AND ALL WE DO IS GO ROUND AND ROUND IN CIRCLES. I'M GOING TO DO SOMETHING FOR A CHANGE.


AW, THAT'S NO'-- THAT'S--
LOOK, IF YOU'RE...PUNISHIN' ME, BECAUSE O' THE WAY I LEFT YOU...
THAT'S RIGHT, HUGHIE. IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU.
BUT I--!
LISTEN.
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF I STAY OR GO. WE WON'T BE TOGETHER EITHER WAY, WILL WE?
BUT WHAT ABOUT...YOU FOUND ME?
MAYBE IT'S JUST A LINE.
THE STUFF YOU FOUND OUT ABOUT ME, YOU CAN'T GET PAST IT. MAYBE YOU NEVER WILL.
GIVE ME SOME TIME. CALL ME IF YOU WANT ME-- AND I MEAN WANT ME. OKAY?

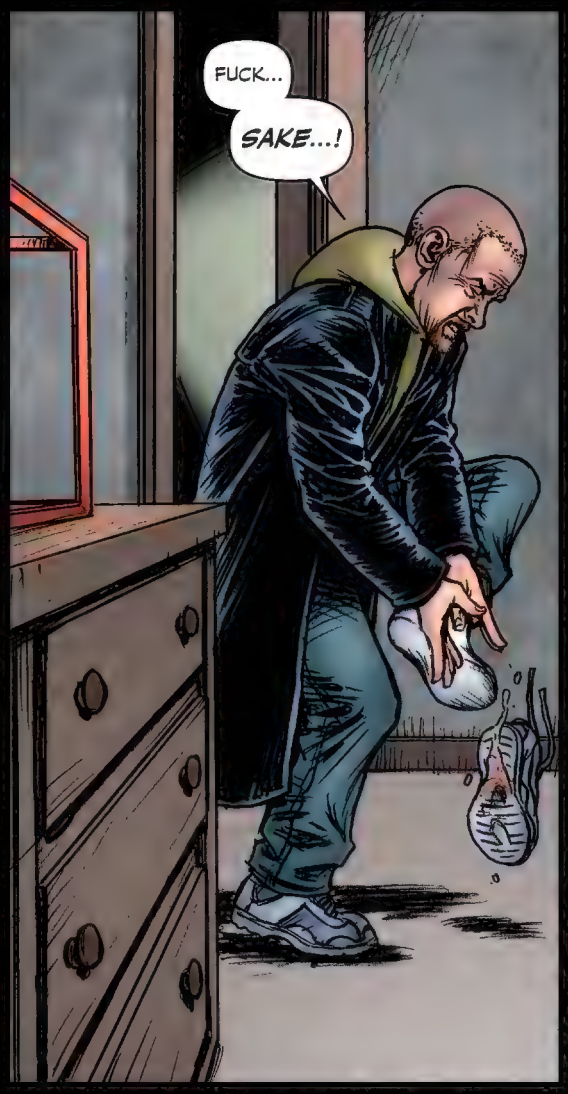

HULLO, MISTER POTAMUS...
YEAH?
YOUR MOTHER'S
HOLE

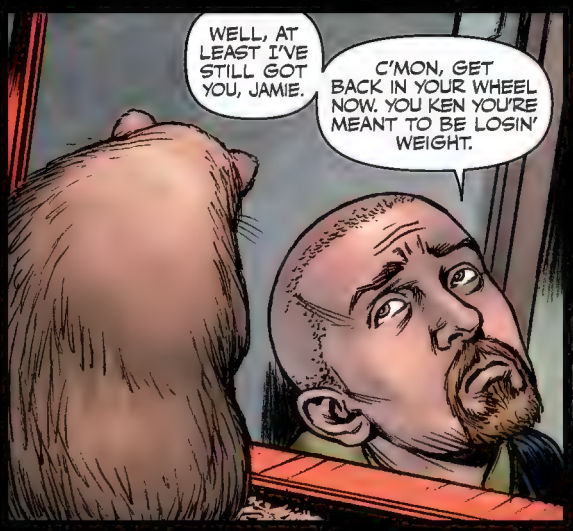
?

Messages
Calendar
Photos
Camera
YouTube
Stocks
Maps
Weather
Vas Text
yesterday
Facebook
Settings
App Store
Compass

EH? AW, THAT'S NO' EVEN A WORD, VAS.
JESUS.

AW--!





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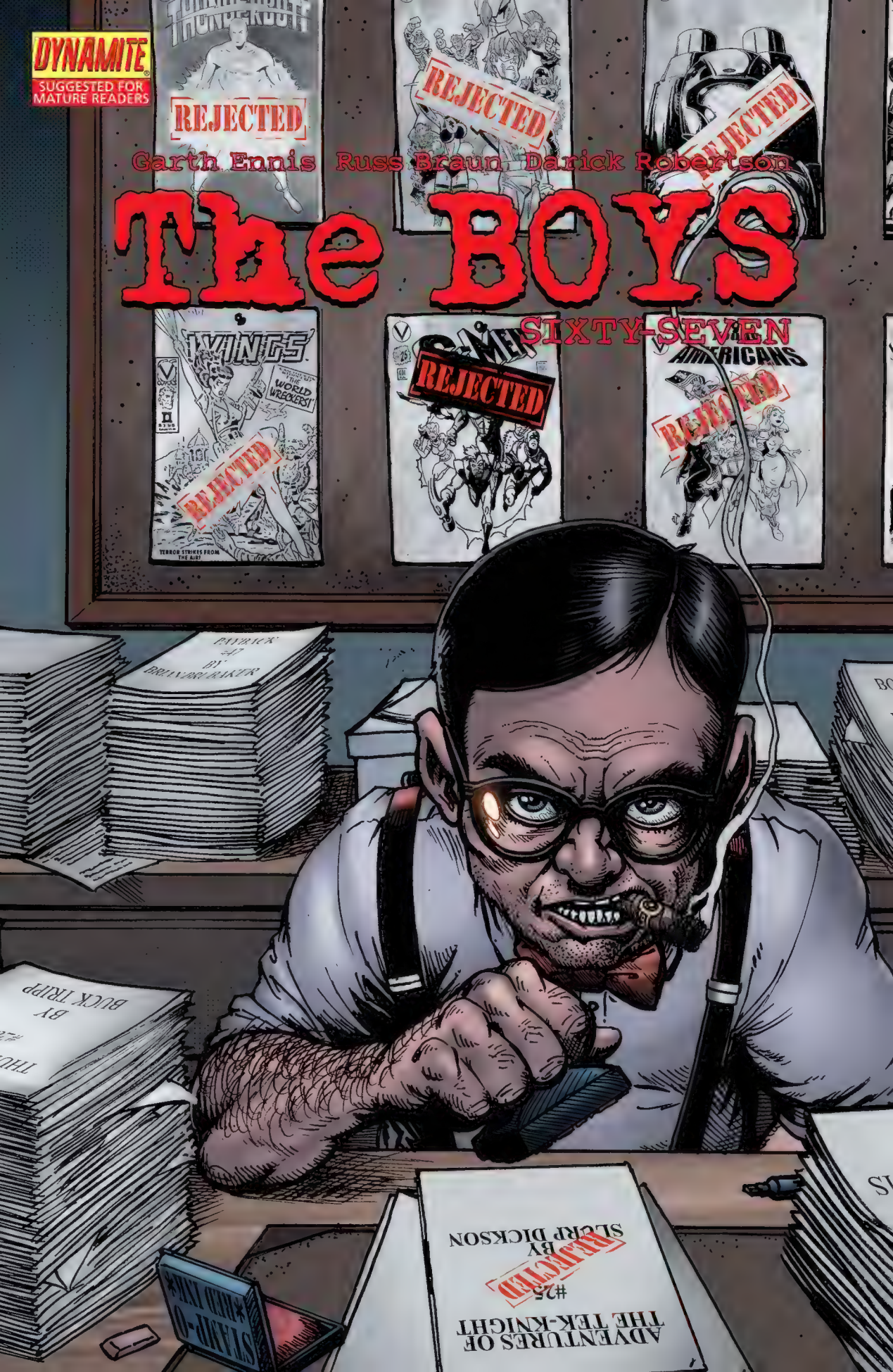
DYNAMITE
SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS
REJECTED
Garth Ennis Russ Braun Darick Robertson
The BOYS
SIXTY-SEVEN
WINGS
THE WORLD WRECKERS!
TERROR STRIKES FROM THE AIR!
AMERICANS
ADVENTURES OF THE TEK-KNIGHT
#25
BY SLORP DICKSON
STAMP-O *HID ITM*

Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

SIXTY-SEVEN

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

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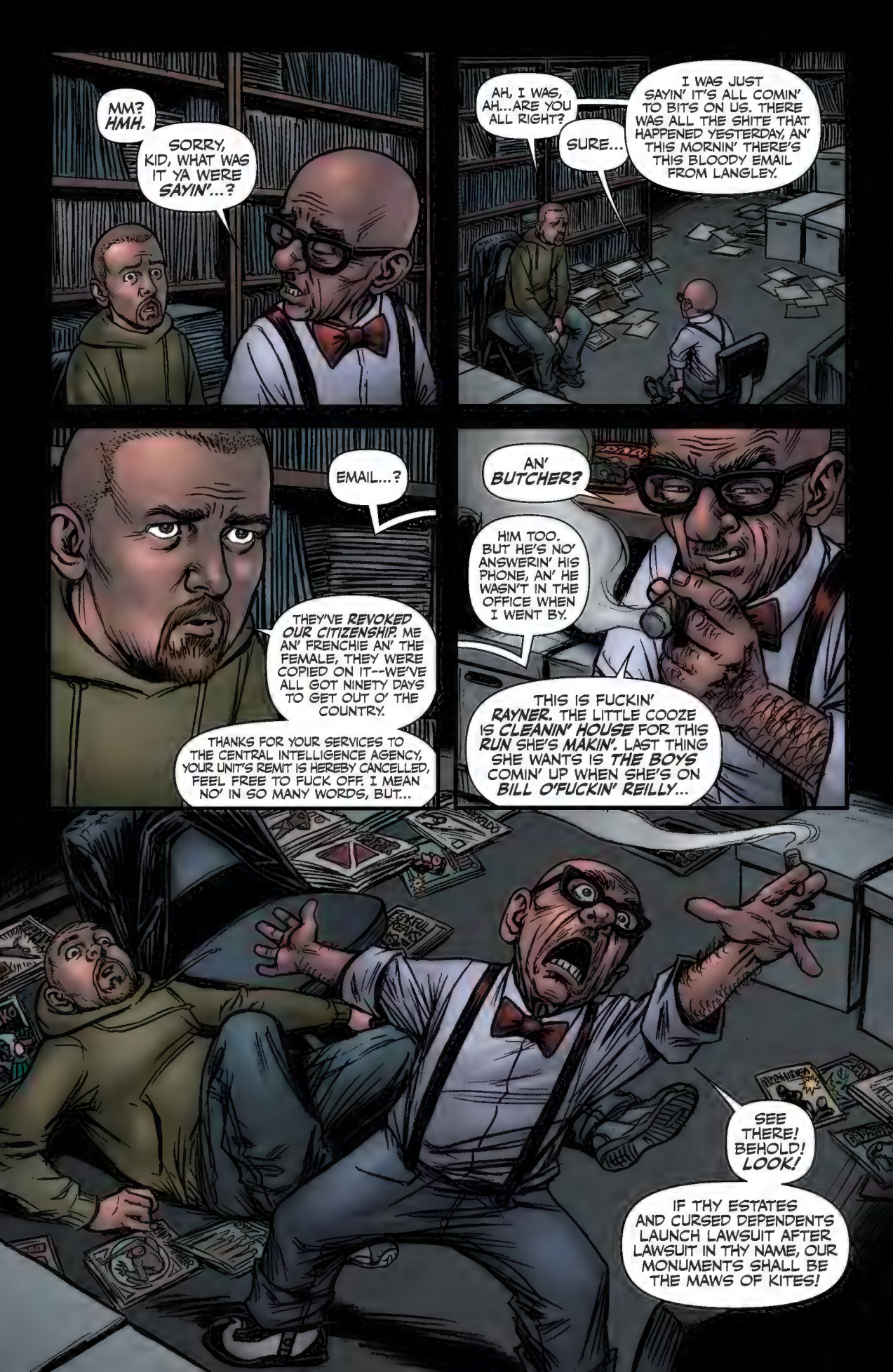
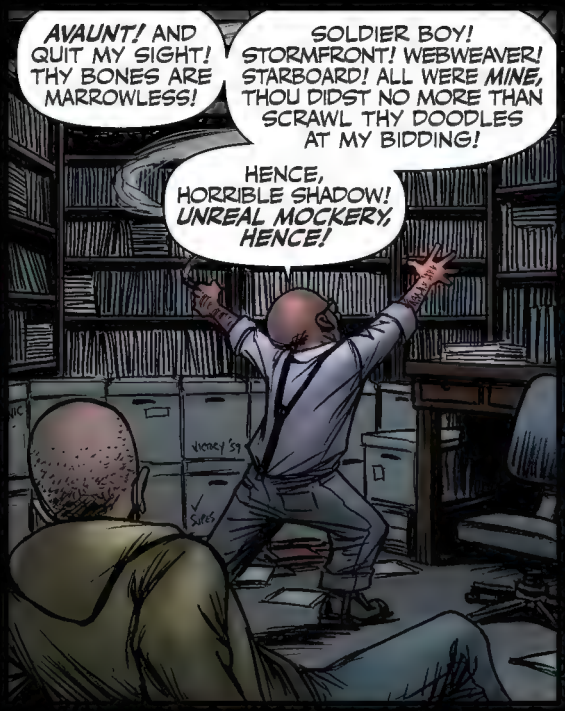
THE BLOODY DOORS OFF

part two


MM? HMH.
SORRY, KID, WHAT WAS IT YA WERE SAYIN'...?
AH, I WAS, AH...ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SURE...
I WAS JUST SAYIN' IT'S ALL COMIN' TO BITS ON US. THERE WAS ALL THE SHITE THAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY, AN' THIS MORNIN' THERE'S THIS BLOODY EMAIL FROM LANGLEY.
EMAIL...?
THEY'VE REVOKED OUR CITIZENSHIP. ME AN' FRENCHIE AN' THE FEMALE, THEY WERE COPIED ON IT--WE'VE ALL GOT NINETY DAYS TO GET OUT O' THE COUNTRY.
THANKS FOR YOUR SERVICES TO THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, YOUR UNIT'S REMIT IS HEREBY CANCELLED, FEEL FREE TO FUCK OFF. I MEAN NO' IN SO MANY WORDS, BUT...
AN' BUTCHER?
HIM TOO. BUT HE'S NO' ANSWERIN' HIS PHONE, AN' HE WASN'T IN THE OFFICE WHEN I WENT BY.
THIS IS FUCKIN' RAYNER. THE LITTLE COOZE IS CLEANIN' HOUSE FOR THIS RUN SHE'S MAKIN'. LAST THING SHE WANTS IS THE BOYS COMIN' UP WHEN SHE'S ON BILL O'FUCKIN' REILLY...
SEE THERE! BEHOLD! LOOK!
IF THY ESTATES AND CURSED DEPENDENTS LAUNCH LAWSUIT AFTER LAWSUIT IN THY NAME, OUR MONUMENTS SHALL BE THE MAWS OF KITES!


AVAUNT! AND QUIT MY SIGHT! THY BONES ARE MARROWLESS!
SOLDIER BOY! STORMFRONT! WEBWEAVER! STARBOARD! ALL WERE MINE, THOU DIDST NO MORE THAN SCRAWL THY DOODLES AT MY BIDDING!
HENCE, HORRIBLE SHADOW! UNREAL MOCKERY, HENCE!

IT...
IT WILL HAVE BLOOD, THEY SAY.
BLOOD. WILL. HAVE. BLOOD.

HUH? WHAT THE HELL'RE YA DOIN' DOWN THERE?
I--
SAY, DID YA HEAR ABOUT OL' VAS...?

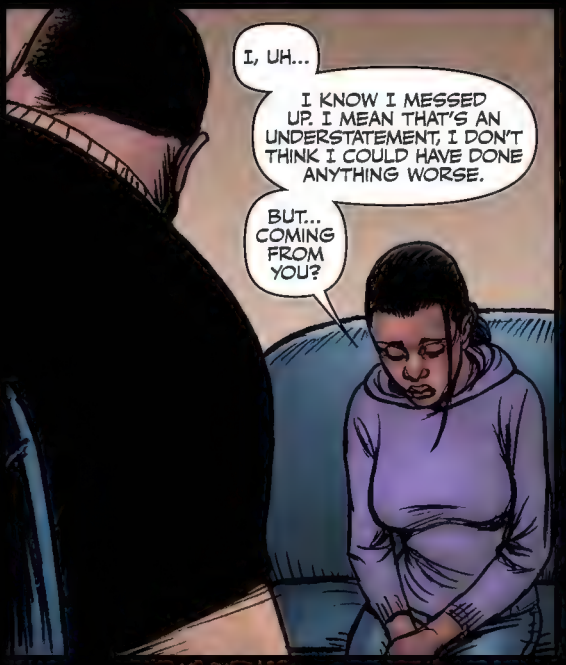
VAS? UH...
AYE, HE TEXTED ME YESTERDAY. MADE NO BLOODY SENSE AT ALL, MIND YOU.
HE WHAT? YOU BEEN SMOKIN' THE MARIDGE-OO-ANNA, KID?

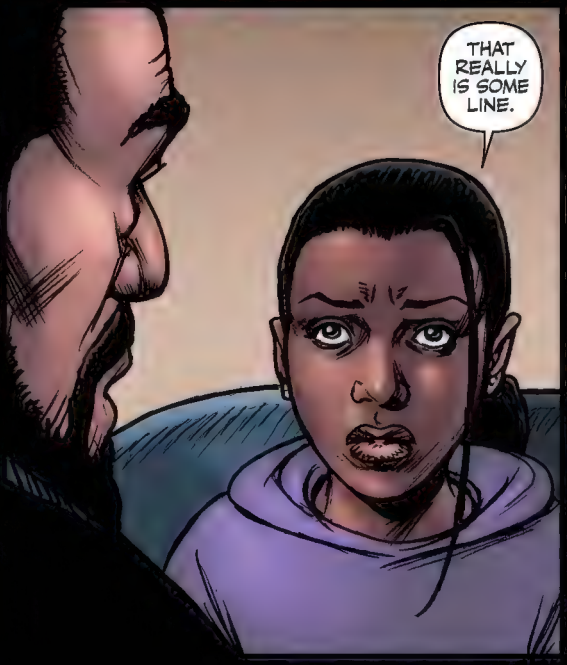
VAS IS DEAD, SOMEONE CUT HIM IN HALF WITH A GODDAMNED ROCKET-LAUNCHER...!

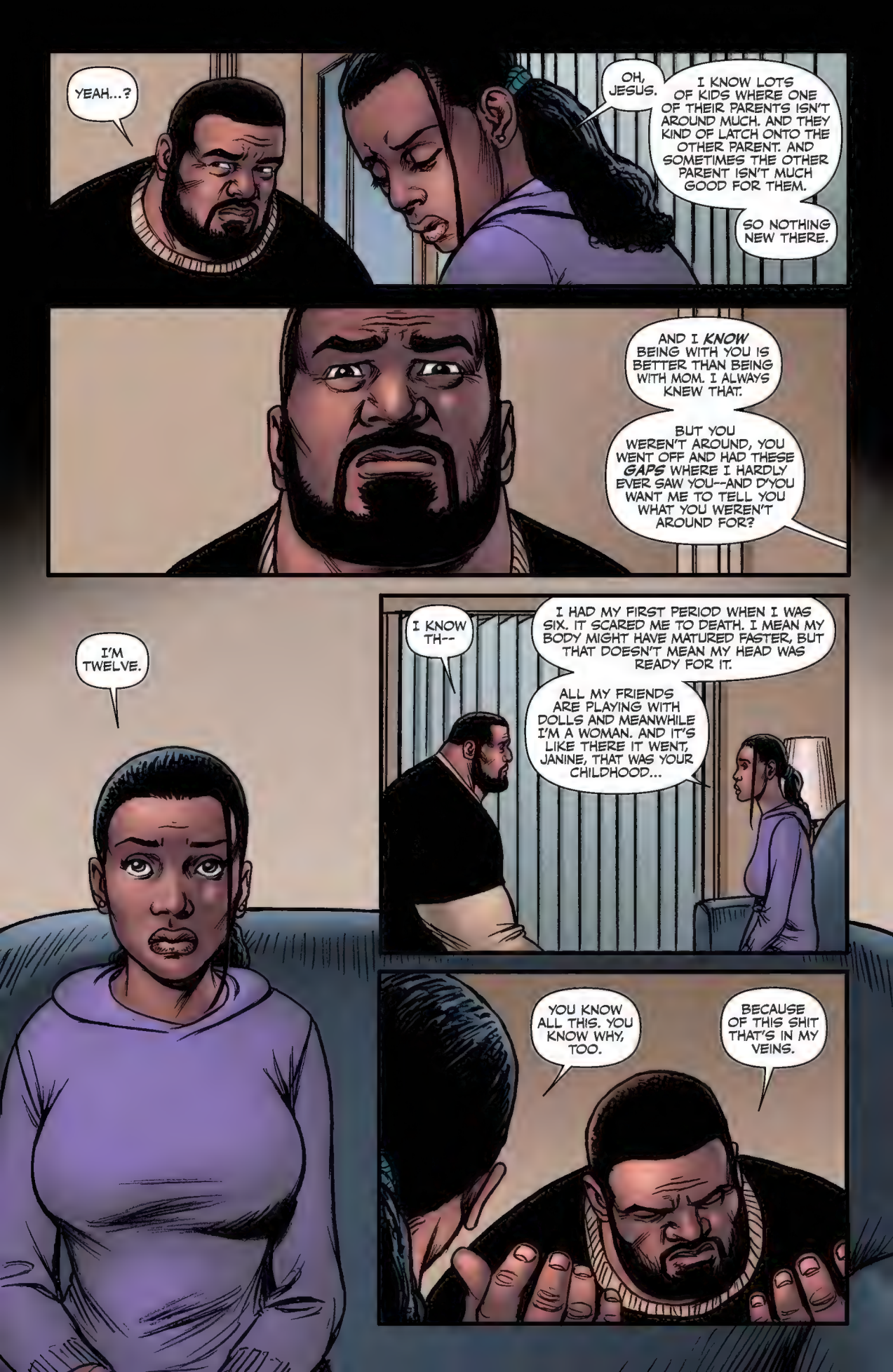
'COURSE I DID.
FINDIN' PEOPLE'S WHAT I DO.

AN'...YOU RENTED THE PLACE IN YOUR OWN NAME. I PRETTY MUCH GOT OFF THE PLANE AN' COME STRAIGHT HERE.
JANINE, I AIN'T ANGRY WIT' YOU, HONEY.

I AIN'T GONNA YELL AT YOU OR NOTHIN' ELSE LIKE THAT.
I'M JUST HERE TO BE YOUR DADDY.

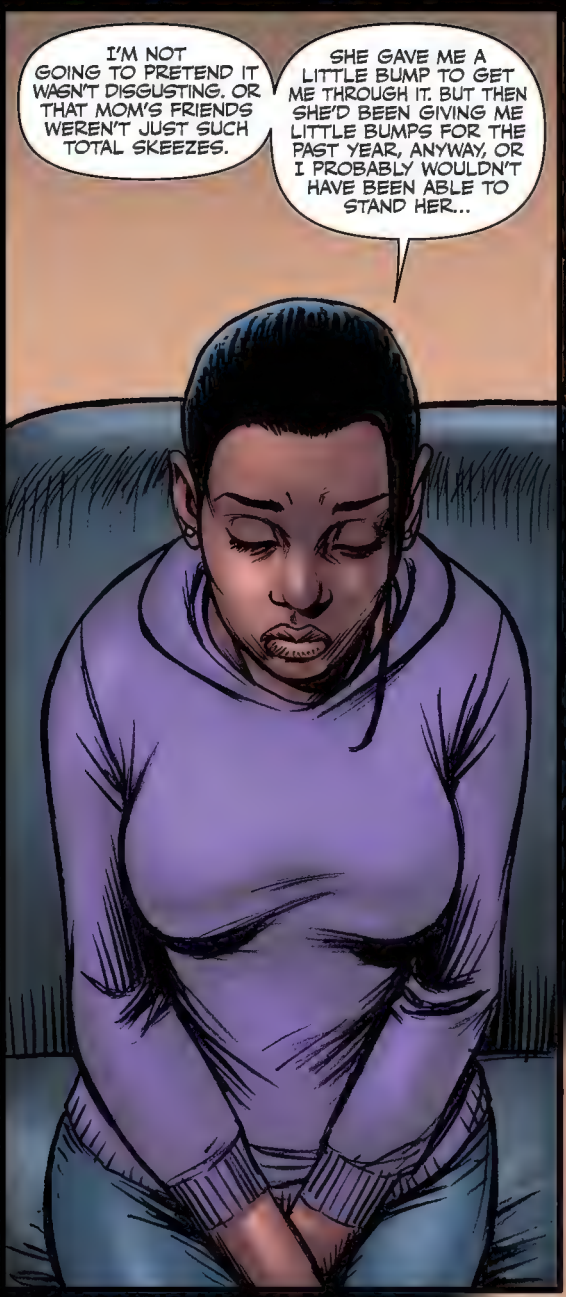

I, UH...
I KNOW I MESSED UP. I MEAN THAT'S AN UNDERSTATEMENT, I DON'T THINK I COULD HAVE DONE ANYTHING WORSE.
BUT... COMING FROM YOU?


THAT REALLY IS SOME LINE.


YEAH...?
OH, JESUS.
I KNOW LOTS OF KIDS WHERE ONE OF THEIR PARENTS ISN'T AROUND MUCH. AND THEY KIND OF LATCH ONTO THE OTHER PARENT. AND SOMETIMES THE OTHER PARENT ISN'T MUCH GOOD FOR THEM.
SO NOTHING NEW THERE.
AND I KNOW BEING WITH YOU IS BETTER THAN BEING WITH MOM. I ALWAYS KNEW THAT.
BUT YOU WEREN'T AROUND, YOU WENT OFF AND HAD THESE GAPS WHERE I HARDLY EVER SAW YOU--AND D'YOU WANT ME TO TELL YOU WHAT YOU WEREN'T AROUND FOR?
I'M TWELVE.
I KNOW TH--
I HAD MY FIRST PERIOD WHEN I WAS SIX. IT SCARED ME TO DEATH. I MEAN MY BODY MIGHT HAVE MATURED FASTER, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN MY HEAD WAS READY FOR IT.
ALL MY FRIENDS ARE PLAYING WITH DOLLS AND MEANWHILE I'M A WOMAN. AND IT'S LIKE THERE IT WENT, JANINE, THAT WAS YOUR CHILDHOOD...
YOU KNOW ALL THIS. YOU KNOW WHY, TOO.
BECAUSE OF THIS SHIT THAT'S IN MY VEINS.

THAT MUCH IS NOT YOUR FAULT.
BUT YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT I WENT THROUGH AN AWFUL LOT ON MY OWN, JUST BECAUSE YOU WEREN'T THERE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT MIGHT BE COMING NEXT, EITHER, AND YOU'VE NEVER BEEN THERE FOR ME TO TALK TO ABOUT THAT.
I WILL BE, I--
SO IS IT REALLY ALL THAT SURPRISING I TURNED TO MOM?

I GET THAT. WHATEVER I THINK OF HER. AN' I GET WHY YOU'RE MAD AT ME.
BUT--JANINE, HONEY--
I MEAN GOD DAMMIT...!
A PORNO MOVIE?

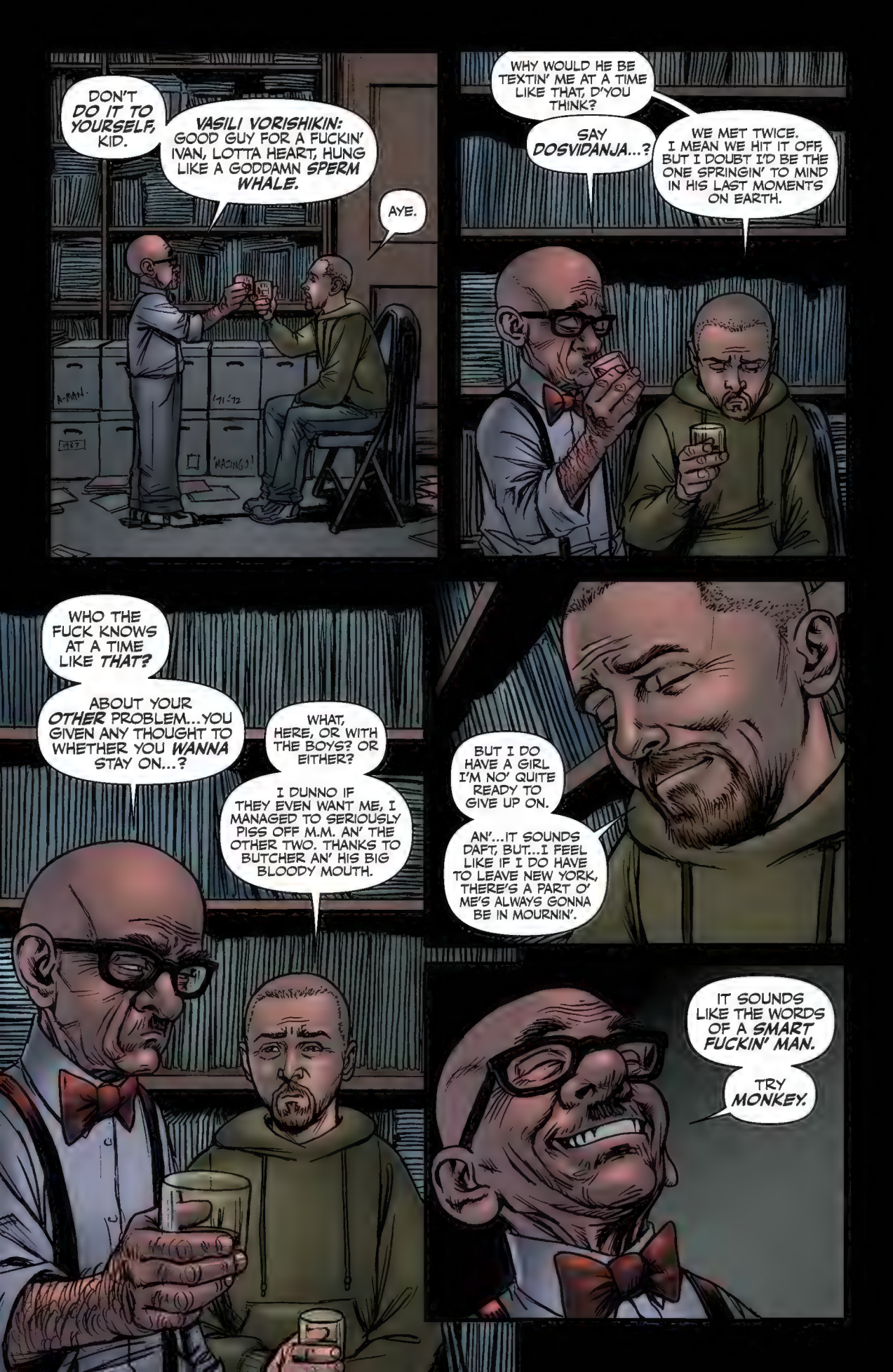

I'M NOT GOING TO PRETEND IT WASN'T DISGUSTING. OR THAT MOM'S FRIENDS WEREN'T JUST SUCH TOTAL SKEEZES.
SHE GAVE ME A LITTLE BUMP TO GET ME THROUGH IT. BUT THEN SHE'D BEEN GIVING ME LITTLE BUMPS FOR THE PAST YEAR, ANYWAY, OR I PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO STAND HER...

WHERE SHE AT?
OH, STOP IT.
JANINE, I GOT TO TALK TO HER. HER AN' THESE F--THESE FRIENDSA HERS.
LOOK, IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE LIKE THAT, I DON'T THINK I CAN EVEN DO THIS...

LOOK--
I'M TRYING, OKAY? I'M TRYING. I'M TELLING YOU THE TRUTH, I'M HAVING THE FATHER-DAUGHTER CONVERSATION JUST LIKE I'M SUPPOSED TO.
BUT IT'S NOT VERY EASY WITH YOU PRETENDING YOU DON'T KNOW HOW WE GOT HERE, OR THAT I'M NOT UNDER FUCKING SUSPENDED SENTENCE OF DEATH...!

JANINE?
HONEY, WHAT YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?

AW, VAS.
WHAT A SICKENER.
WELL, THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS IN THIS GAME, KID. YOU GOT ANY IDEA HOW LUCKY THE FIVE A' YOU WERE, COMIN' THROUGH ALLA THIS AN' ONLY LOSIN' A DOG...?
I'D A PAL O' MINE BACK HOME GOT KILLED TOO. BUT HE...
THIS GAME? WHAT WAS IT HE WAS DOIN', ANYWAY?
DUNNO... BUT I HEARD ON THE GRAPEVINE THEY FOUND HIM SPREAD ALL OVER THE PLACE, AN' IT DIDN'T LOOK TOO FUCKIN' SELF-INFLICTED...
BUT I DID GET A TEXT FROM HIM YESTERDAY. EXCEPT IT WOULD'VE BEEN THE DAY BEFORE.
HERE, HANG ON--
NOW WHAT THE HELL DOES THAT MEAN...?
SEARCH ME.
BUT...D'YOU THINK HE DID THIS WHILE HE WAS...?
POOR SON OF A BITCH...
FUCK. FUCK.
JUST THE BLOODY THOUGHT OF HIM LYIN' THERE.


DON'T DO IT TO YOURSELF, KID.
VASILI VORISHIKIN: GOOD GUY FOR A FUCKIN' IVAN, LOTTA HEART, HUNG LIKE A GODDAMN SPERM WHALE.
AYE.
WHY WOULD HE BE TEXTIN' ME AT A TIME LIKE THAT, D'YOU THINK?
SAY DOSVIDANJA...?
WE MET TWICE. I MEAN WE HIT IT OFF, BUT I DOUBT I'D BE THE ONE SPRINGIN' TO MIND IN HIS LAST MOMENTS ON EARTH.
WHO THE FUCK KNOWS AT A TIME LIKE THAT?
ABOUT YOUR OTHER PROBLEM...YOU GIVEN ANY THOUGHT TO WHETHER YOU WANNA STAY ON...?
WHAT, HERE, OR WITH THE BOYS? OR EITHER?
I DUNNO IF THEY EVEN WANT ME, I MANAGED TO SERIOUSLY PISS OFF M.M. AN' THE OTHER TWO. THANKS TO BUTCHER AN' HIS BIG BLOODY MOUTH.
BUT I DO HAVE A GIRL I'M NO' QUITE READY TO GIVE UP ON.
AN'...IT SOUNDS DAFT, BUT...I FEEL LIKE IF I DO HAVE TO LEAVE NEW YORK, THERE'S A PART O' ME'S ALWAYS GONNA BE IN MOURNIN'.
IT SOUNDS LIKE THE WORDS OF A SMART FUCKIN' MAN.
TRY MONKEY.

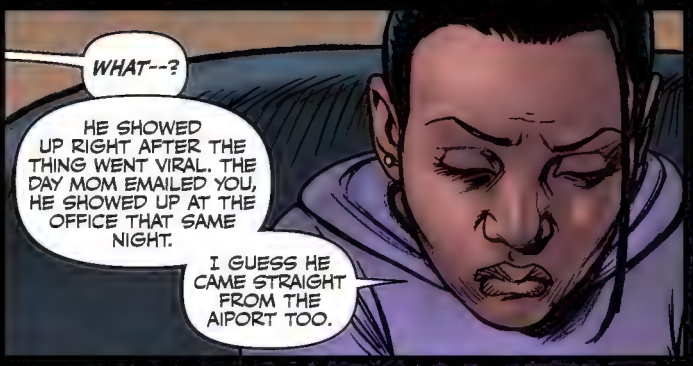
MONKEY...?
THAT'S WHERE I'D START, IF I HAD TROUBLE WITH RAYNER.
SOUND HIM OUT, SEE IF YOU CAN FIGURE YOUR ANGLE OF ATTACK...
BUT-- WHY HIM?
BECAUSE HE'S THE ONLY CONNECTION YOU GOT TO THE BITCH...!
COME ON, KID, YOU SPENT THE LAST COUPLA YEARS AROUND SOME O' THE SMARTEST MOTHERFUCKERS I EVER MET...AIN'T YOU LEARNED NOTHIN', FOR CHRIST'S SAKE...?
UH...AYE.
RIGHT.
WELL THANKS FOR THE DRINK--
SAY...WHAT WAS THAT THING VAS SAID AGAIN? WHAT WAS THE MESSAGE...?
T-THREE-FOUR-ATLENIN.
ATLENIN? AT LENIN...
T-THIRTY-FOUR. YEAH.
WHAT?
IF IT'S T-THIRTY-FOUR IT'S A KIND OF TANK.
COMMIE MODEL.
I DUNNO WHAT IT'S SUPPOSED TO MEAN, BUT A T-THIRTY-FOUR'S A TANK.

"YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THIS?"

I... DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THIS IS...
REALLY.
SERIOUSLY.

BECAUSE IF YOU'RE MAKING ME GO THROUGH IT JUST TO PUNISH ME, FOR SOME MESSED-UP REASON OF YOUR OWN...
JANINE...!

IT WAS UNCLE BILLY.

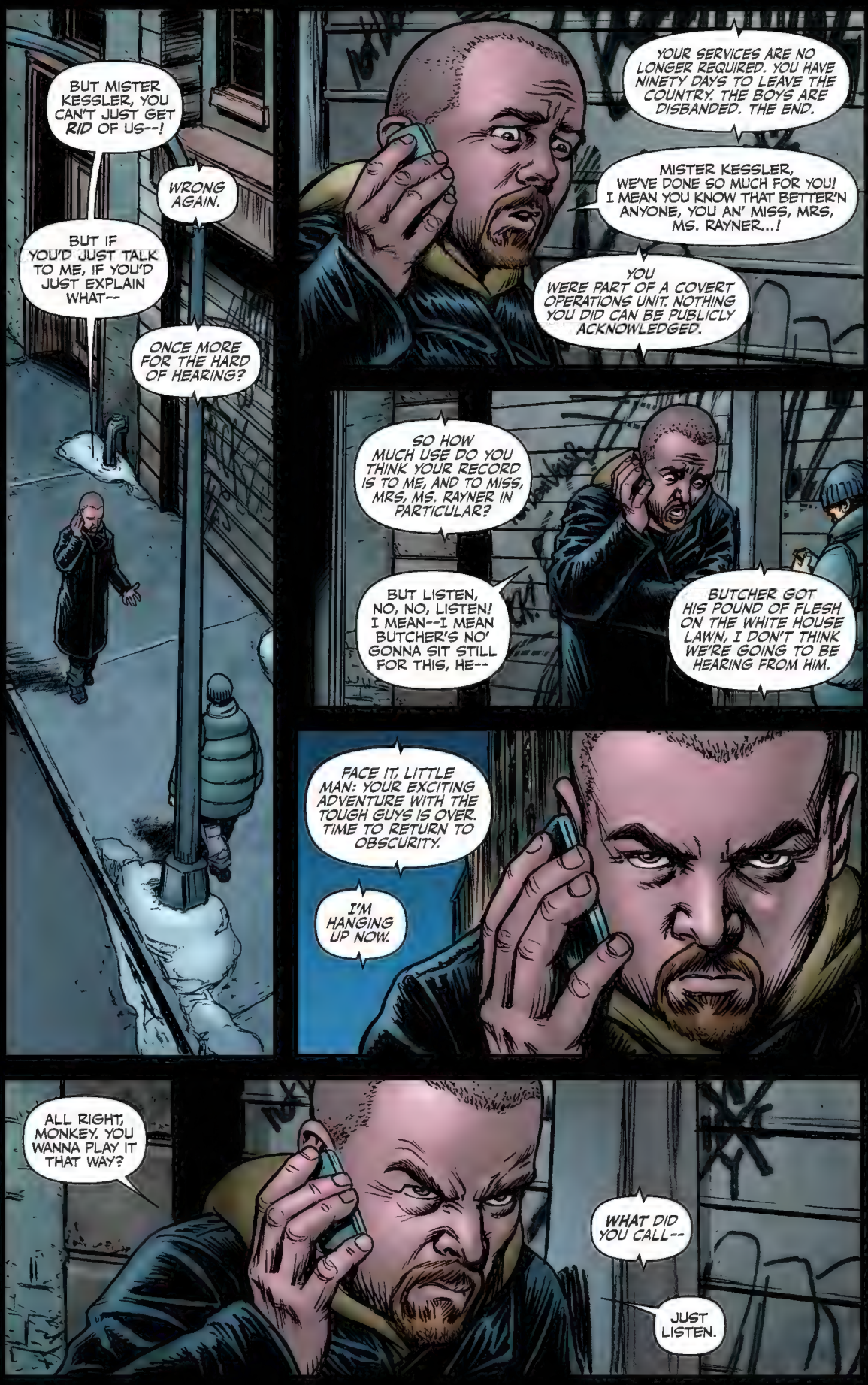

WHAT--?
HE SHOWED UP RIGHT AFTER THE THING WENT VIRAL. THE DAY MOM EMAILED YOU, HE SHOWED UP AT THE OFFICE THAT SAME NIGHT.
I GUESS HE CAME STRAIGHT FROM THE AIPORT TOO.

ARE YOU SURE HE DIDN'T TELL--
JANINE, DON'T STOP TALKIN' NOW--!

I THINK HE JUST WANTED MOM'S ADDRESS, BUT IT SO HAPPENED WE WERE THERE TO HAVE A MEETING. TO TALK ABOUT A SEQUEL, BELIEVE IT OR NOT.
I NEVER...WHEN I WAS A KID I DIDN'T REALLY KNOW UNCLE BILLY. HE SMILED A LOT, HE HAD HIS FUNNY ACCENT. BUT I HARDLY SAW HIM. I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT WHO HE WAS OR WHAT THE TWO OF YOU DID...

HE KILLED JULIUS FIRST.
ONE LOOK AT HIM AND YOU KNEW HE MEANT SERIOUS BUSINESS. SO CHUCKY--HE WAS THE PRODUCER, HE WAS THE GUY THAT MOM HOOKED UP WITH IN THE FIRST PLACE--CHUCKY JUST SNEERED AND KIND OF NODDED TO JULIUS TO DEAL WITH HIM.
JULIUS WAS CHUCKY'S BODYGUARD, HE WAS ALSO IN A LOT OF THE FILMS. HE WAS SIX FEET EIGHT.
UNCLE BILLY REACHED UP AND KIND OF GRABBED HIS HEAD AND--
HE TURNED IT BACK TO FRONT. ONE SECOND JULIUS IS FACING AWAY, AND THE NEXT THERE'S THIS KLUNK AND HE'S LOOKING RIGHT AT ME, AND HE'S AMAZED...
HE DID THIS SHIT IN FRONT OF YOU...?
IT WAS ALL FOR MY BENEFIT, DADDY.
DON'T YOU GET THAT?
THE LOOK ON HIS FACE...IT WAS LIKE WE WERE DISGUSTING TO HIM, BUT ALSO WE WERE THIS GIANT INCONVENIENCE THAT HE COULD HARDLY EVEN BE BOTHERED DEALING WITH.
I FELL OFF MY CHAIR. MOM WENT FOR THE DOOR. HE RAMMED CHUCKY'S HEAD INTO THE WALL. IT WAS ONLY LATER ON I THOUGHT--YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD JULIUS TO SIT DOWN, YOU SHOULD HAVE SCREAMED AT EVERYBODY NOT TO PISS HIM OFF...
BUT I WAS USELESS.
AND I DON'T THINK IT WOULD HAVE MADE ANY DIFFERENCE.
YEAH...
DO YOU REMEMBER THE DAY HE CAME TO GET YOU, TWO OR THREE YEARS BACK? WHEN I WAS MEAN TO YOU, DO YOU REMEMBER THAT?

"THERE WERE SOME BOYS OUTSIDE.
"THEY WERE IDIOTS. I WAS HANGING OUT WITH THEM TO GET AT YOU. UNCLE BILLY SCARED THEM OFF, THEN HE TOLD ME TO STOP TREATING YOU LIKE SHIT.
"HE SAID I WAS LUCKY TO HAVE SOMEONE LIKE YOU FOR A FATHER."
LUMPS
WHAT HE DID WAS-- ONE OF THESE BOYS, HE HAD A GUN--
AND UNCLE BILLY TOOK IT OFF HIM, AND HE LOOKED HIM IN THE EYE AND JUST CRUSHED IT.
AND THAT'S WHAT HE DID TO MOM IN FRONT OF ME.
NO EFFORT. NO EMOTION. CAN'T HAVE BEEN MORE THAN A SECOND.
HE JUST... PUSHED HER...
MOTHERFUCKER.
MOTHERFUCKER, MY GODDAMN DAUGHTER, MOTHER--
YOU KNOW WHAT HE SAID TO ME, DADDY? WHILE HE WAS KILLING MOM? WHILE HE WAS LOOKING ME IN THE EYES AND JUST DESTROYING HER?
HE SAID-- HE SAID--
OH, GOD.
"YOU LEAVE THAT MAN ALONE."


BUT MISTER KESSLER, YOU CAN'T JUST GET RID OF US--!
WRONG AGAIN.
BUT IF YOU'D JUST TALK TO ME, IF YOU'D JUST EXPLAIN WHAT--
ONCE MORE FOR THE HARD OF HEARING?
YOUR SERVICES ARE NO LONGER REQUIRED. YOU HAVE NINETY DAYS TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. THE BOYS ARE DISBANDED. THE END.
MISTER KESSLER, WE'VE DONE SO MUCH FOR YOU! I MEAN YOU KNOW THAT BETTER'N ANYONE, YOU AN' MISS, MRS, MS. RAYNER...!
YOU WERE PART OF A COVERT OPERATIONS UNIT. NOTHING YOU DID CAN BE PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGED.
SO HOW MUCH USE DO YOU THINK YOUR RECORD IS TO ME, AND TO MISS, MRS, MS. RAYNER IN PARTICULAR?
BUT LISTEN, NO, NO, LISTEN! I MEAN--I MEAN BUTCHER'S NO' GONNA SIT STILL FOR THIS, HE--
BUTCHER GOT HIS POUND OF FLESH ON THE WHITE HOUSE LAWN, I DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING TO BE HEARING FROM HIM.
FACE IT, LITTLE MAN: YOUR EXCITING ADVENTURE WITH THE TOUGH GUYS IS OVER. TIME TO RETURN TO OBSCURITY.
I'M HANGING UP NOW.
ALL RIGHT, MONKEY. YOU WANNA PLAY IT THAT WAY?
WHAT DID YOU CALL--
JUST LISTEN.

DO YOU REALLY THINK RAYNER'S GONNA HAND OVER TO YOU WHEN SHE FUCKS OFF?
D'YOU THINK A GUY WHO GOT FUCKED UP THE ARSE BY A BULLDOG AN' ENDED UP CLEANIN' MONKEY SPUNK OUT OF HIS EARS--D'YOU THINK YOU'RE GONNA GET HER RECOMMENDATION FOR HEAD O' THE C.I.A.?
WH-WH-WHAT--?
SHE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW ABOUT--
HE TOLD ME, FOR FUCK'S SAKE. D'YOU THINK HE DIDN'T TELL HER ABOUT IT, SOME ROMANTIC FUCKIN' EVENIN' WHEN HE'D FINISHED SHAGGIN' HER OVER HER DESK?
I BET THEY HAD A RIGHT BLOODY LAUGH. AN' WE'VE NO' EVEN TOUCHED ON THE PARALYMPICS THING YET, I MEAN SHE'S GOTTA BE WONDERIN' HOW THAT'LL LOOK IF IT EVER COMES OUT IN THE WASH...!
IF I WAS YOU I'D BE THINKIN' ABOUT WHO CAN HELP YOU. LIKE IF THERE'S ANYONE YOU KEN WHO COULD DELIVER SOMETHIN' TO MAKE YOU LOOK LIKE A STAR.
I--I--
SEE THE NEXT TIME I PHONE YOU, SUNSHINE? HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS FOR ME.
AN' BE READY TO BE A FUCKSIGHT MORE POLITE.
DID I JUST...PULL A BUTCHER?

SUSPENSO

NOT GOT ONE O' THE BLARNEY COCK?

WOULDA MADE A NICE LITTLE FAMILY PHOTO.
IF DOC PECULIAR HADN'T FARMED HIM OUT TO SOME KIDS' HOME IN PADDY LAND.

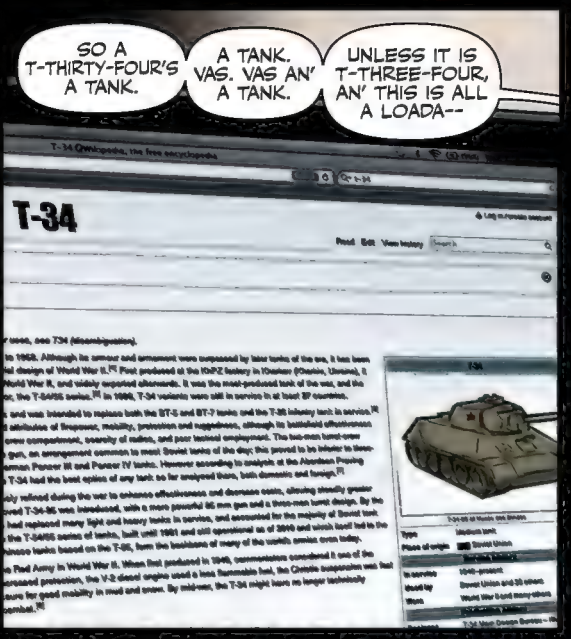
MAY DEC '89 VICTORY
COME ON, YOU DON'T WANNA WAKE THE TWO ARSEHOLES UPSTAIRS.
NEEEEEHH--!
FOR THEIR SAKE, IF NOTHIN' ELSE.
WHAT'S... WHAT'S...?
YOU KNOW.
OR YOU'LL WORK IT OUT.
HE'S BEEN TO SEE YOU ALREADY, AIN'T HE? BOUND TO HAVE, WITH RAYNER AN' THAT. WHAT'D YOU TELL HIM?
I DIDN'T SAY SHIT, I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU'RE--
WELL, MAYBE HE'LL TELL YOU SOMETHIN', AN' YOU'LL PUT TWO AN' TWO TOGETHER.
MAYBE HE'LL COME DOWN HERE TOMORROW AN' SAY... VOGELBAUM.
AN' THAT I CANNOT HAVE.

JESUS CHRIST.
AFTER EVERYTHING I...AFTER ALL THIS FUCKIN' TIME--!
YEAH, WELL.
RATHER YOU THAN HIM.
NO--!
HNNHH!
ALL STARZ
NO! NO! NO! NO!
NNEEEEEEEEHHH

UHHHHHHH...!
I'M SHITFOOT!
IT'S THE POCALYPSE
I LIKE CANDY!
AW NO.
AW SSSHIT.
SHPLENDIDDIO...
YOU FUCKIN'
COCK

THERE YOU ARE, JAMIE.
THERE YOU GO, WEE PAL.

ALL RIGHT, SMART MAN, LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN PULL AN M.M....


SO A T-THIRTY-FOUR'S A TANK.
A TANK. VAS. VAS AN' A TANK.
UNLESS IT IS T-THREE-FOUR, AN' THIS IS ALL A LOADA--
T-34

WAS TANK COMMANDER.
ARMY IS SHIT NOW. BACK THEN WAS MIGHTY SOVIET JUGGERNAUT, COULD HAVE PUSHED NATO FAGGOTS WHOLE WAY TO ENGLISH CHANNEL. NO OFFENSE.

FUCK, WAS IT HIS TANK?
OUT OF SOVIET SERVICE IN THE FIFTIES, NO, HE WOULDN'T'VE BEEN... HANG ON.
T-THIRTY-FOUR AT LENIN.

Untitled - Message (HTML)

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To: t34@lenin.com

CC:

Subject: Vas?

From: T34@LENIN.RU

Subject: Re: Vas?

Date: January 8, 2008 23.11.07 EDT

To: weehughie@mac.com

This is an automated response

Little Hughie, if you read this I am dead and my worst fears are true. I am sorry

next: DO YOU KNOW WHAT I HATE?

DYNAMITE®
SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

Garth Ennis Russ Braun Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

SIXTY-EIGHT

Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

SIXTY-EIGHT

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

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GARTH ENNIS

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TONY AVI A

Art by:
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Covers by:
DARICK ROBERTSON

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SIMON BOWLAND

The Boys Created By:
ENNIS & ROBERTSON

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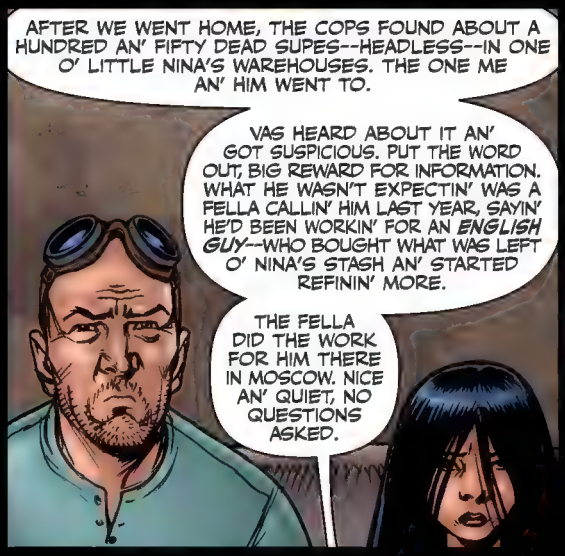
THE BLOODY DOORS OFF

part three

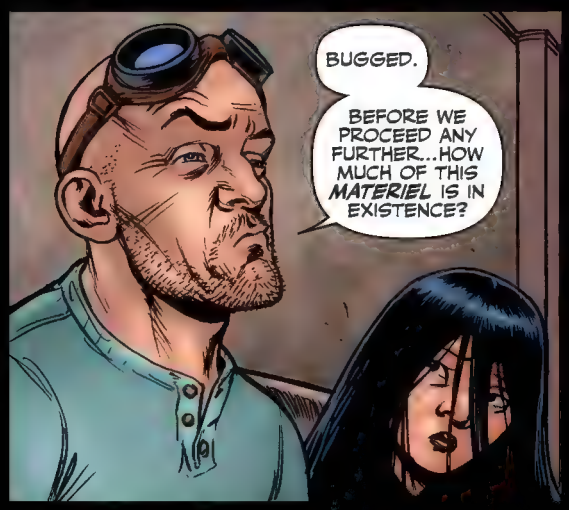
PARDON... PARDON...
JE SUIS DESOLE...
FOR FUCK'S SAKE, FRENCHIE, THIS IS SERIOUS--!
OF COURSE IT IS, MON CAPITAINE. YOU CALL AND WE COME RUNNING, WE ARE HERE TO SERVE.
M.M. CALLED YOU...!
I MEAN JESUS CHRIST, IT WAS A MISTAKE, ALL RIGHT? I'M SORRY, IT WAS BLOODY DAFT!
BUT THE THING WAS I'D FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT IT, BUT HE HADN'T--AN' HE USED IT, HE STORED IT AWAY AN' HE BROUGHT IT UP WHEN IT'D DO THE MOST--
THE EIGHT HUNDRED POUND GORILLA'S WHAT THE FUCK BUTCHER'S DOIN'.
WHAT HE'S BEEN DOIN' ALL ALONG.
LISTEN.
HE SPLIT US UP. HE GAVE US TIME OFF AN' HE GOT YOU PISSED OFF AT ME, SO WE'D NO' BE IN THE WAY WHEN HE GOT STARTED.
I REALLY APPRECIATE YOU COMIN' BACK. HONESTLY.
BUT THE LEGEND'S DEAD. I HAD SEAN MCGUINEA SCREAMIN' DOWN THE PHONE AT ME AT SIX O'CLOCK THIS MORNIN'.
AN' VAS IS DEAD TOO, AN' IT'S STARTIN' TO LOOK PRETTY BLOODY CERTAIN BUTCHER DID THEM BOTH.

PETIT HUGHIE... AH...
COME ONCE MORE?

D'YOU REMEMBER THAT OTHER VERSION O' COMPOUND V, THE STUFF WE RAN INTO IN RUSSIA? BLOWS PEOPLE'S HEADS APART, IF YOU GET THE DETONATION FREQUENCY JUST RIGHT?
OUI...
I THINK BUTCHER'S GOT HOLD OF A LOAD OF IT.


AFTER WE WENT HOME, THE COPS FOUND ABOUT A HUNDRED AN' FIFTY DEAD SUPES--HEADLESS--IN ONE O' LITTLE NINA'S WAREHOUSES. THE ONE ME AN' HIM WENT TO.
VAS HEARD ABOUT IT AN' GOT SUSPICIOUS. PUT THE WORD OUT, BIG REWARD FOR INFORMATION. WHAT HE WASN'T EXPECTIN' WAS A FELLA CALLIN' HIM LAST YEAR, SAYIN' HE'D BEEN WORKIN' FOR AN ENGLISH GUY--WHO BOUGHT WHAT WAS LEFT O' NINA'S STASH AN' STARTED REFININ' MORE.
THE FELLA DID THE WORK FOR HIM THERE IN MOSCOW. NICE AN' QUIET, NO QUESTIONS ASKED.

VAS WENT TO THIS GUY'S OFFICE, SAW THE PAPERWORK TO SEND THE STUFF TO FLORIDA. THE GUY SAID HIS EMPLOYER WAS ON HIS WAY OVER AGAIN TO FINISH UP AN' PAY THE LAST INSTALLMENT, AN' COULD HE HAVE THIS BIG REWARD NOW, PLEASE?
THE WAY VAS SAW IT, IF IT WAS BUTCHER, IT WAS PRETTY OBVIOUS WHAT THE LAST INSTALMENT WAS GONNA BE. SO STICKIN' WI' THAT PARTICULAR THOUGHT, HE CHECKED THE BOY'S PHONE.


BUGGED.
BEFORE WE PROCEED ANY FURTHER...HOW MUCH OF THIS MATERIEL IS IN EXISTENCE?

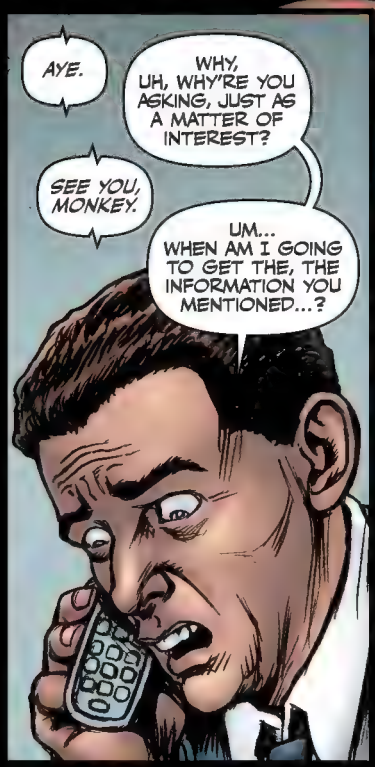
ONE HUNDRED AN' EIGHTEEN METRIC TONS.

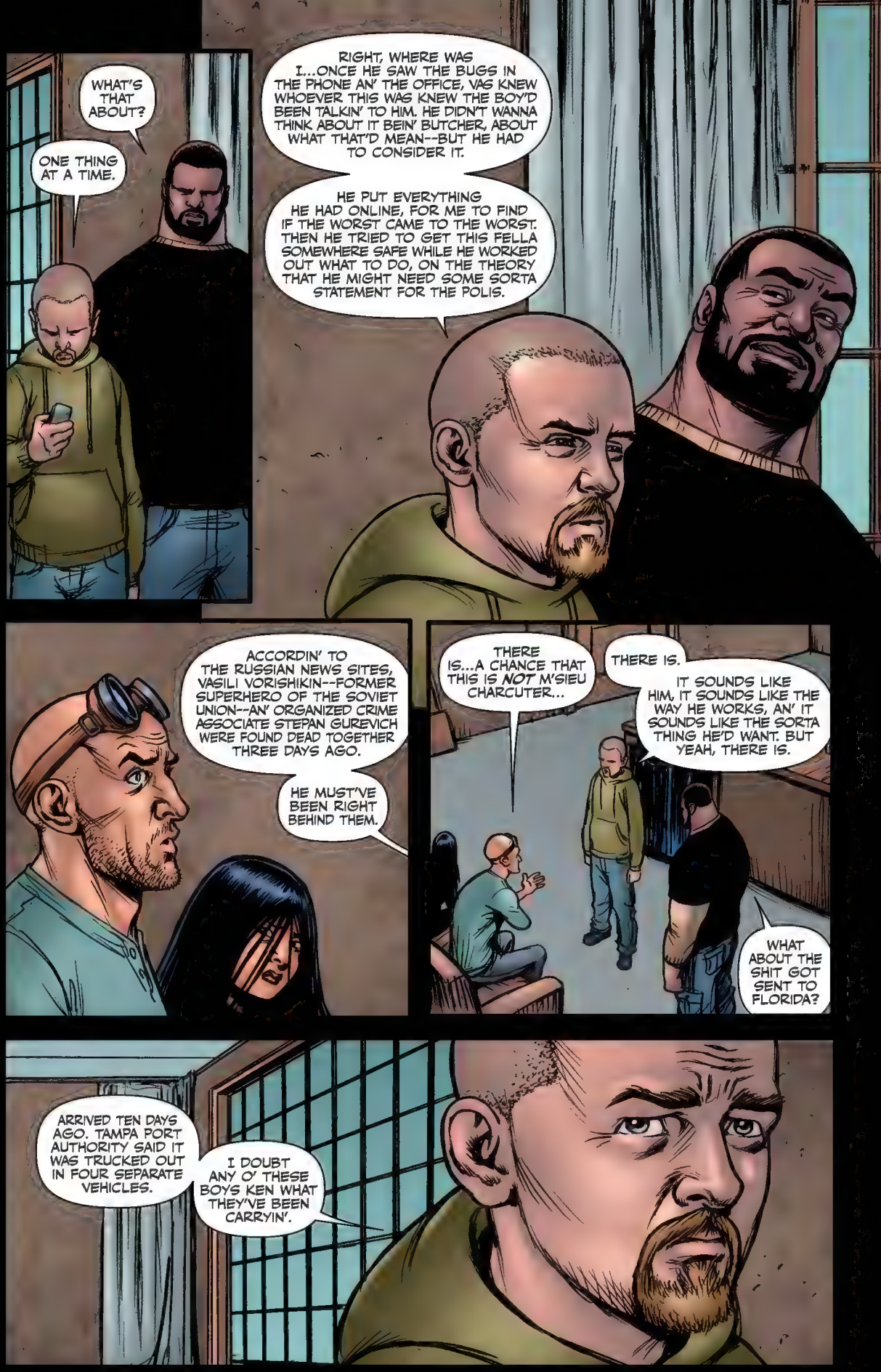
Monkey
office
HANG ON, BOYS, I'VE BEEN WAITIN' ON THIS WEE PRICK...
SPEAK.
UM... HELLO?
THAT WAS HELLO, YOU DOSS BASTARD.
UM, RIGHT, UM...THAT THING YOU ASKED ABOUT THIS MORNING? YOU KNOW, WHAT IT WAS THAT BUTCHER ACTUALLY GAVE US?
WELL, I DIDN'T WANT TO TALK TO RAYNER DIRECTLY, I DON'T WANT HER KNOWING I'M IN TOUCH WITH YOU. I MEAN SHE'S GONE, BUT TECHNICALLY I'M ONLY THE CARETAKER HERE, AND IF SHE FINDS OUT I'M NOT PLAYING BALL--
GET TO THE FUCKIN' POINT. QUICK.
"OKAY, I ASKED THE AIR FORCE, MADE IT SOUND LIKE THE NEW DIRECTOR FINDING HIS FEET. THEY SAID THEIR MAIN CONCERN--WHEN RAYNER CONTACTED NORAD ABOUT A POSSIBLE SUPERHERO INSURGENCY--WAS ENGAGING HUMAN-SIZED TARGETS CAPABLE OF FLIGHT.
"TOO SMALL. TOO MANEUVERABLE. BUT THE ANSWER SHOWED UP STRAIGHT AWAY."

"THEIR RADAR-GUIDED MISSILES WERE ADAPTED TO HOME IN ON THE NEURONS IN THE SUPES' BRAINS. SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE INCREASED RATE AT WHICH THEY FIRE, WITH THE BRAIN CHEMISTRY PECULIAR TO COMPOUND V.

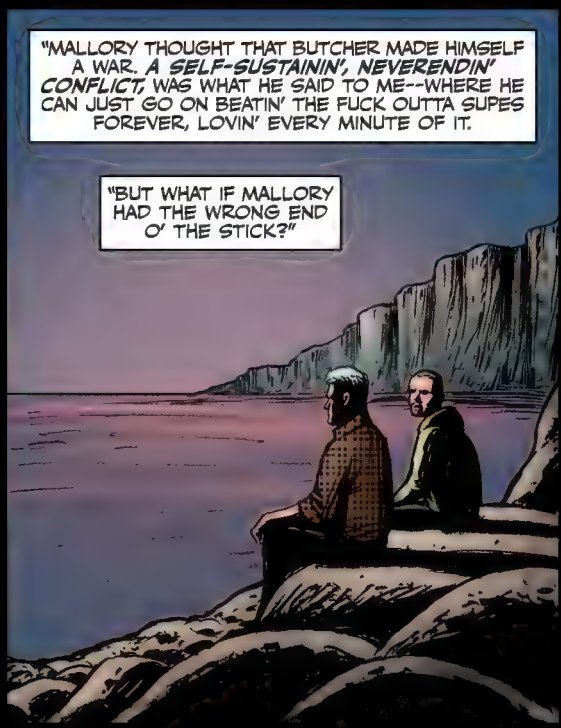
"OBVIOUSLY THAT WAS WHAT SAVED THE DAY. WITHOUT SUCH SPECIALIZED TECH, WE'D NOW BE LIVING IN A VERY DIFFERENT AMERICA--AND RAYNER'S CAREER PROSPECTS ARE GOING TO REFLECT THAT.

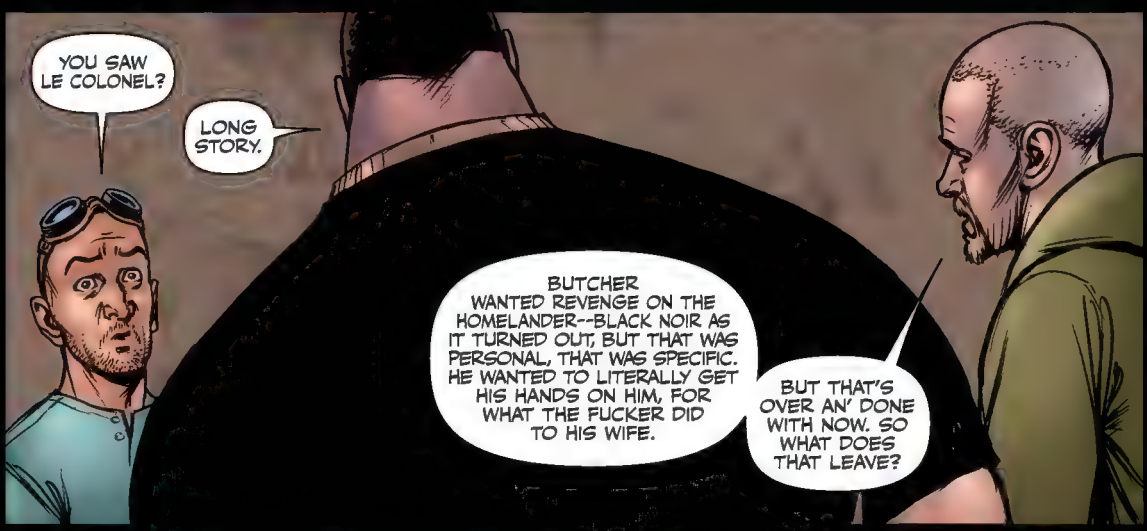
"ONLY SENIOR COMMAND KNEW THE DETAILS, OF COURSE. AND SHE WASN'T SAYING WHERE SHE GOT THE INTEL. BUT..."




WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?
ONE THING AT A TIME.
RIGHT, WHERE WAS I...ONCE HE SAW THE BUGS IN THE PHONE AN' THE OFFICE, VAS KNEW WHOEVER THIS WAS KNEW THE BOY'D BEEN TALKIN' TO HIM. HE DIDN'T WANNA THINK ABOUT IT BEIN' BUTCHER, ABOUT WHAT THAT'D MEAN--BUT HE HAD TO CONSIDER IT.
HE PUT EVERYTHING HE HAD ONLINE, FOR ME TO FIND IF THE WORST CAME TO THE WORST. THEN HE TRIED TO GET THIS FELLA SOMEWHERE SAFE WHILE HE WORKED OUT WHAT TO DO, ON THE THEORY THAT HE MIGHT NEED SOME SORTA STATEMENT FOR THE POLIS.
ACCORDIN' TO THE RUSSIAN NEWS SITES, VASILI VORISHIKIN--FORMER SUPERHERO OF THE SOVIET UNION--AN' ORGANIZED CRIME ASSOCIATE STEPAN GUREVICH WERE FOUND DEAD TOGETHER THREE DAYS AGO.
HE MUST'VE BEEN RIGHT BEHIND THEM.
THERE IS...A CHANCE THAT THIS IS *NOT* M'SIEU CHARCUTER...
THERE IS.
IT SOUNDS LIKE HIM, IT SOUNDS LIKE THE WAY HE WORKS, AN' IT SOUNDS LIKE THE SORTA THING HE'D WANT. BUT YEAH, THERE IS.
WHAT ABOUT THE SHIT GOT SENT TO FLORIDA?
ARRIVED TEN DAYS AGO. TAMPA PORT AUTHORITY SAID IT WAS TRUCKED OUT IN FOUR SEPARATE VEHICLES.
I DOUBT ANY O' THESE BOYS KEN WHAT THEY'VE BEEN CARRYIN'.

LET US SAY THAT IT IS HIM.
WHAT DO WE BELIEVE THAT HE IS DOING?
WELL...WHAT HE MIGHT HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO.


"MALLORY THOUGHT THAT BUTCHER MADE HIMSELF A WAR. *A SELF-SUSTAININ', NEVERENDIN' CONFLICT,* WAS WHAT HE SAID TO ME--WHERE HE CAN JUST GO ON BEATIN' THE FUCK OUTTA SUPES FOREVER, LOVIN' EVERY MINUTE OF IT.
"BUT WHAT IF MALLORY HAD THE WRONG END O' THE STICK?"

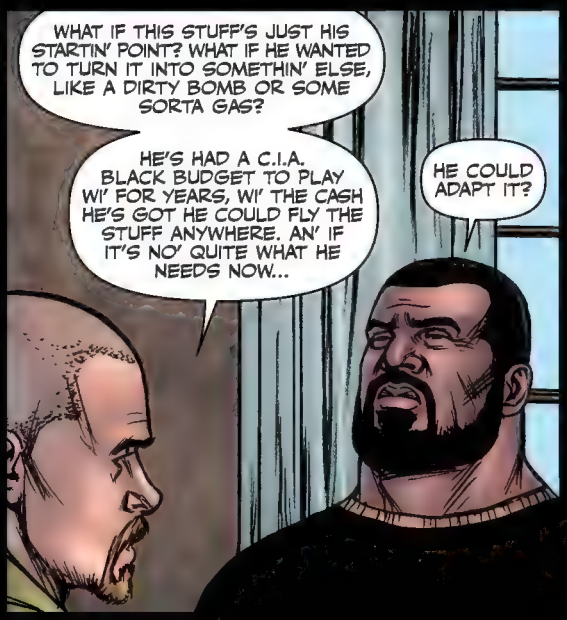

YOU SAW LE COLONEL?
LONG STORY.
BUTCHER WANTED REVENGE ON THE HOMELANDER--BLACK NOIR AS IT TURNED OUT, BUT THAT WAS PERSONAL, THAT WAS SPECIFIC. HE WANTED TO LITERALLY GET HIS HANDS ON HIM, FOR WHAT THE FUCKER DID TO HIS WIFE.
BUT THAT'S OVER AN' DONE WITH NOW. SO WHAT DOES THAT LEAVE?

EVERY OTHER SUPE ON THE FUCKIN' PLANET.
NON...!
SAID SO HIMSELF.

"REMEMBER THE PAGEANT? THE DEAD SUPE KIDS?
"WITH GREAT POWER COMES THE TOTAL FUCKIN' CERTAINTY THAT YOU'RE GONNA TURN INTO A CUNT, AN' HE BELIEVED IT. HE WAS TALKIN' 'BOUT KILLIN' EVERY MUTHAFUCKIN' ONE OF 'EM."

BREAKIN' LEGS OR A TOTAL WIPE-OUT.
WHAT SOUNDS MORE LIKE HIM?

IF HE COULD, HE SAID. DO WE THINK HE CAN?
THIS HEAD-EXPLODING V: AS I RECALL IT WAS UNSTABLE STUFF. THE SUBJECT MUST INGEST IT, IN FOOD OR BY INJECTION, AND EVEN THEN IT MUST BE DETONATED BY A SIGNAL...
AYE, WELL I'VE BEEN THINKIN' ABOUT THAT.


WHAT IF THIS STUFF'S JUST HIS STARTIN' POINT? WHAT IF HE WANTED TO TURN IT INTO SOMETHIN' ELSE, LIKE A DIRTY BOMB OR SOME SORTA GAS?
HE'S HAD A C.I.A. BLACK BUDGET TO PLAY WI' FOR YEARS, WI' THE CASH HE'S GOT HE COULD FLY THE STUFF ANYWHERE. AN' IF IT'S NO' QUITE WHAT HE NEEDS NOW...
HE COULD ADAPT IT?

BUTCHER AIN'T NO FUCKIN' BIOCHEMIST, HUGHIE.
NO, BUT I THINK HE'S GOT ONE WORKIN' FOR HIM. THAT'S WHY I CALLED MONKEY, HE SAID WHATEVER SPECIALIST KNOW-HOW THE AIR FORCE GOT HOLD OF CAME FROM HIM...

VOGELBAUM?

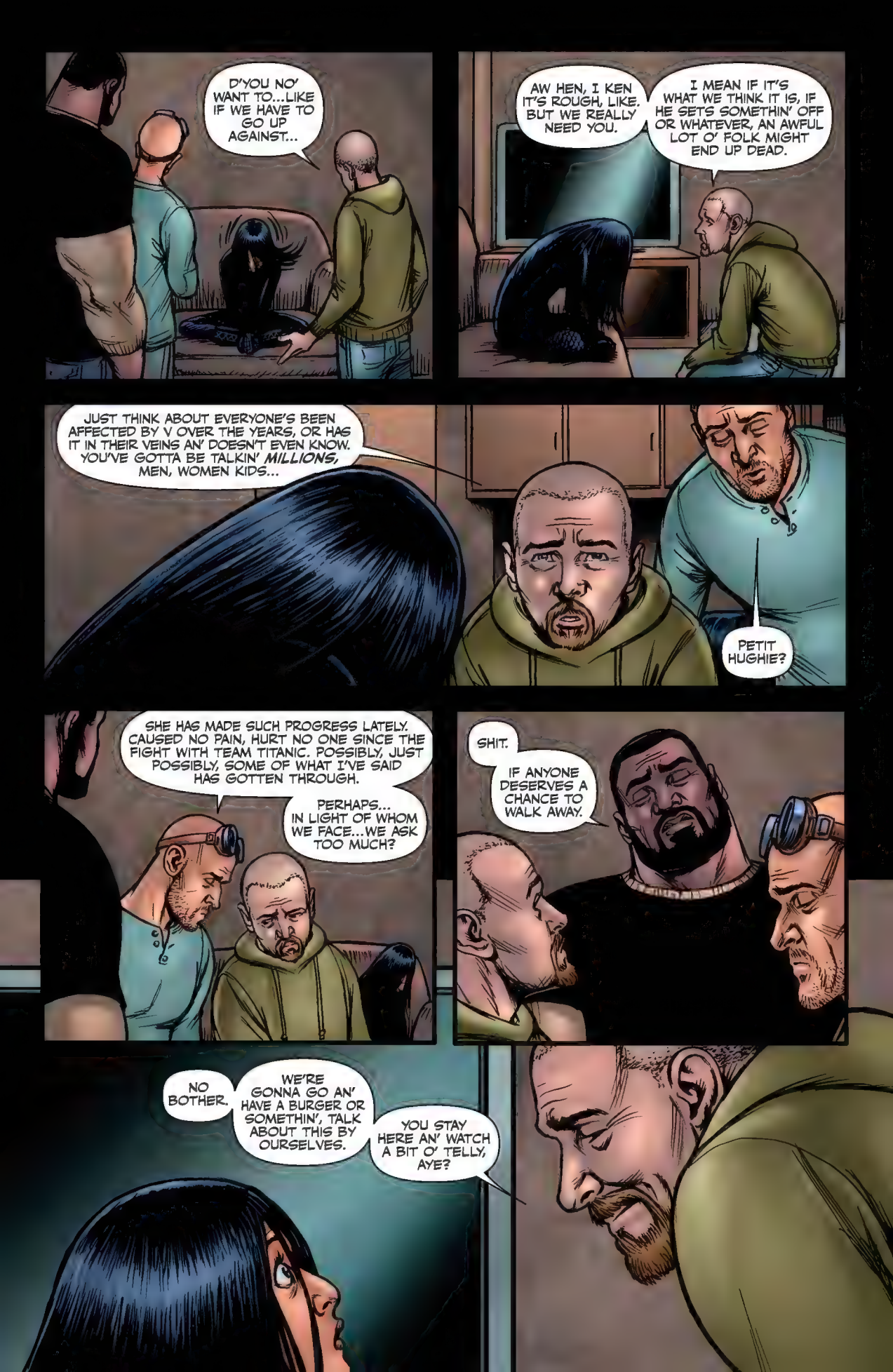
THE MAN COMMITTED SUICIDE...!
TURNED OUT THAT WAS BULLSHIT. MALLORY KEPT HIM ALIVE TO BREW OUR VERSION OF V, THEN HAD BUTCHER CANCEL HIS TICKET.
BUT WHAT IF THAT'S BULLSHIT TOO?
I FUCKIN' DOUBT IT. MALLORY TOLD ME BUTCHER TORE HIS THROAT OUT WITH HIS TEETH.

HE SAW IT HAPPEN?
NO, BUT...
WHAT'D HE SEE?
WELL HE WAS JUST OUTSIDE, HE...
AN' WHO THE FUCK WE TALKIN' ABOUT HERE?

IF THIS IS TRUE.
IF HE IS...WEAPONIZING V, WITH OR WITHOUT PROFESSOR VOGELBAUM.
WHAT WILL WE DO?

WELL--
TALK TO HIM, LIKE...

FIRST THING TO--
UN MOMENT.
OH.
UM... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, HEN?


D'YOU NO' WANT TO...LIKE IF WE HAVE TO GO UP AGAINST...
AW HEN, I KEN IT'S ROUGH, LIKE. BUT WE REALLY NEED YOU.
I MEAN IF IT'S WHAT WE THINK IT IS, IF HE SETS SOMETHIN' OFF OR WHATEVER, AN AWFUL LOT O' FOLK MIGHT END UP DEAD.
JUST THINK ABOUT EVERYONE'S BEEN AFFECTED BY V OVER THE YEARS, OR HAS IT IN THEIR VEINS AN' DOESN'T EVEN KNOW. YOU'VE GOTTA BE TALKIN' MILLIONS, MEN, WOMEN KIDS...
PETIT HUGHIE?
SHE HAS MADE SUCH PROGRESS LATELY. CAUSED NO PAIN, HURT NO ONE SINCE THE FIGHT WITH TEAM TITANIC. POSSIBLY, JUST POSSIBLY, SOME OF WHAT I'VE SAID HAS GOTTEN THROUGH.
PERHAPS... IN LIGHT OF WHOM WE FACE...WE ASK TOO MUCH?
SHIT.
IF ANYONE DESERVES A CHANCE TO WALK AWAY.
NO BOTHER.
WE'RE GONNA GO AN' HAVE A BURGER OR SOMETHIN', TALK ABOUT THIS BY OURSELVES.
YOU STAY HERE AN' WATCH A BIT O' TELLY, AYE?

I HATE MEAN PEOPLE.
THE FOUR OF US, THEN.

FILES ARE WIPED. DESK'S EMPTY.
NO SURPRISES THERE.
MALLORY DID THE SAME BEFORE HE LEFT, BUT I'M THINKIN' THERE MIGHT BE SOMETHIN' IN THE LANGLEY DATABASE.
LIKE IF THE AGENCY BOUGHT THE PROPERTY IN THE FIRST PLACE, OR THEY STILL PAYIN' RENT ON IT. THAT'S IF HE JUST TOOK OVER A REGULAR SAFEHOUSE.
HE SEEMED A LOT MORE CAREFUL THAN THAT, EVEN IN THE SHORT TIME I TALKED TO HIM...
HE WAS.
FILES
FILES
BUT IT'S ALL WE GOT TO GO ON RIGHT NOW. CALL YOU IF I GET LUCKY.
AYE, ALL RIGHT. I'M AT THE D.M.V. NOW, I'M GONNA BE HERE A WEE WHILE YET.
SEE YOU.
OH, BLOODY HELL.
WHY AIN'T YOU IN L.A., SORTIN' OUT YER KID?

YEAH.
WE GONNA HAVE TO HAVE A TALK ABOUT THAT.
I THOUGHT I'D PUT THE FEAR O' GOD IN HER. SHE WASN'T SUPPOSED TO TELL YOU ANYTHIN' ABOUT IT.
WE GONNA HAVE TO HAVE A TALK ABOUT THAT, TOO.
THOUGHT YOU MIGHTA BEEN GONE FOR GOOD...
WELL, THE COAST WAS MEANT TO BE CLEAR, WASN'T IT? I WIPED ALL MY STUFF; IT OCCURRED IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA TO NIP BACK AN' WIPE YOURS AN' ALL.
JUST IN CASE, LIKE.
AS LONG AS WE'RE FILLIN' IN THE BLANKS...WHAT WAS ALL THAT ABOUT, SENDIN' HUGHIE TO SEE MALLORY?
OTHER WAY ROUND.
FIGURED THERE WAS SHIT HE NEEDED TO KNOW. PROB'LY BEST COMIN' STRAIGHT FROM SOURCE.
AN' I GUESS I MIGHTA BEEN THINKIN'... EVERYTHIN' YOU'D BEEN DOIN' ROUND THEN, LIKE WIT' HUGHIE AN' MALCHEMICAL, THERE MIGHTA COME A TIME WE WAS GONNA HAVE TO GET SHIT STRAIGHT.
MALLORY GOT INVOLVED AGAIN, HE MAYBE COULDA HELPED YOU SEE SENSE.
NAH, NAH, THAT WOULDNA DONE IT...!

THAT ROUNDABOUT ROUTE BOLLOCKS, ALL THEM MAYBES AN' MIGHT'VES. THAT'S NO GOOD.
YOU'VE GOTTA LEARN TO MAKE YER MIND UP.
SO...YOU REALLY DOIN' THIS, HUH?
I REALLY AM.
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA DIE IN THE WHITE HOUSE. TAKE A COUPLA CHUNKS OUTTA THE HOMELANDER, SO THE LADS OUTSIDE COULD FINISH HIM OFF.
BUT...NO. SO I SUPPOSE I'M GONNA HAVE TO GO THROUGH WITH IT, AIN'T I?
HUH.
WHERE YOU THINK THAT LEAVES US?
WELL, IF YOU WANT, YOU CAN STILL WALK AWAY.

--DAY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY INTO--
AH, IF YOU CAN HEAR ME IN THE STUDIO, SHAWNA, TODAY WE'RE EXPECTED TO HEAR TESTIMONY FROM--
--NOT BUYING YOUR WAY OUT OF THIS, YOU GREEDY SONS OF BITCHES!
VOUGHT KILLE MY M
SUPERHERO
--TURNED OUT TO BE JESSICA BRADLEY, A SENIOR FIGURE IN VOUGHT'S SUPERHUMAN DEVELOPMENT SECTION--
--WITH THE DEATH TOLL AT OVER TWO HUNDRED AND--
YOU'RE LUCKY YOU'RE NOT ROTTING IN JAIL, YOU AND THE REST OF THOSE--
FUCK YOU!
MPDC
VOUGHT AMERICAN GO HOME
KEEP THEM BACK, GODAMMIT--
AAAH, JESUS--
NO MORE
ROCK THE
--FEELINGS OBVIOUSLY RUNNING HIGH, MS. BRADLEY, WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE COMMITTEE'S--
MY WIFE DIED AT THE PENTAGON, YOU FUCKING CUNT WHORE!!

JESUS CHRIST ALMIGHTY.
MS. BRADLEY?

MS. BRADLEY, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
OH--I'M FINE...REALLY, I'M FINE...
DID YOU HAVE TO COME IN PAST THAT MOB OUTSIDE? DID NO ONE INFORM YOU THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL MORE DISCRETE ENTRANCES FOR OCCASIONS LIKE THIS?

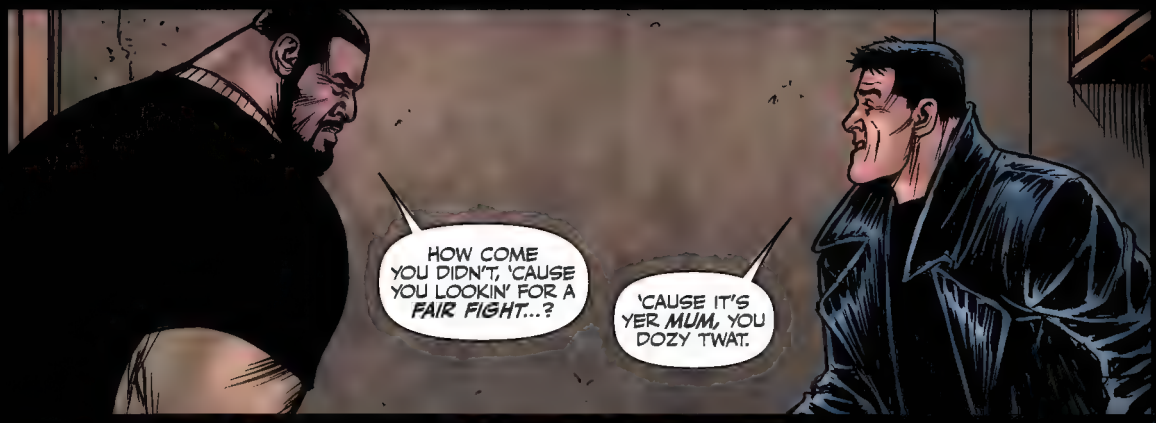
I--
THAT IS SHAMEFUL.
ABSOLUTELY SHAMEFUL, THESE THUGS ARE CLEARLY OUT FOR BLOOD.

DO YOU NEED SOME TIME TO COLLECT YOURSELF? UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I CAN EASILY HAVE OUR LEGAL TEAM ASK FOR--
NO.
NO, I'M QUITE ALL RIGHT.

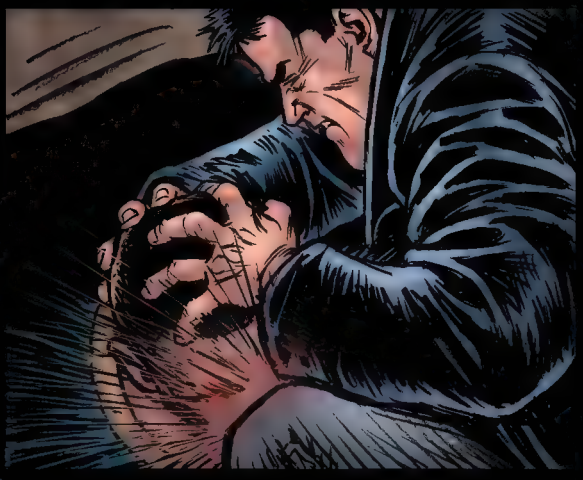
WELL, THAT IS ADMIRABLE.

THAT BEING THE CASE, SHALL WE GO IN?

WHUHHH!!
AWHH--!
JESUS...
YOU KNOW...I DID HAVE ONE IDEA...
I WAS GONNA NIP UP AN' TAKE CARE O' YER MUM JUST BEFORE I GOT THE BALL ROLLIN'. MAKE SURE YOU RAN OUTTA MAGIC POTION.
TOO LATE NOW.


HOW COME YOU DIDN'T, 'CAUSE YOU LOOKIN' FOR A FAIR FIGHT...?
'CAUSE IT'S YER MUM, YOU DOZY TWAT.

FUCK YOU--!



AH, SHIT.

MUTHAFUCKA!!
WHY THE FUCK YOU GOTTA DO THIS? WHY YOU GOTTA BE THE WAY YOU ARE?!
FILES
YOU THINK I FUCKIN' WANT THIS SHIT, GODAMMIT?!
I KNOW.
I KNOW.
YOU'RE THE BEST MATE A CUNT LIKE ME COULD HOPE FOR.
I DON'T DESERVE TO FUCKIN' KNOW YOU.

MMUUUUUHHH
MMUUUUUHHH

BUT I AIN'T GOT NO MATES.
MMMMHHHHHH
MM
next: WHOSE WOODS THESE ARE I THINK I KNOW

DYNAMITE
SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

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The BOYS

SIXTY-NINE

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The BOYS™

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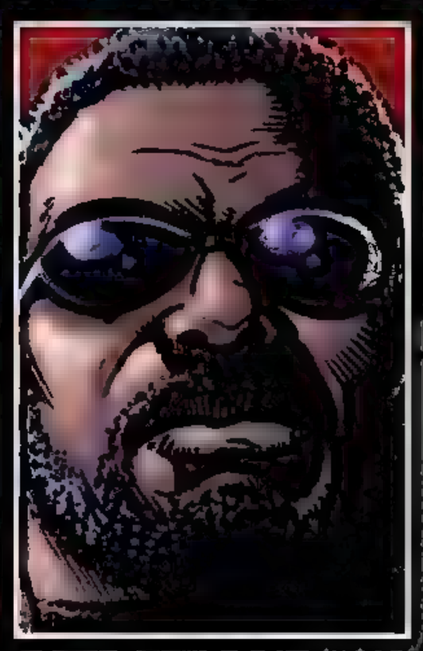
In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.



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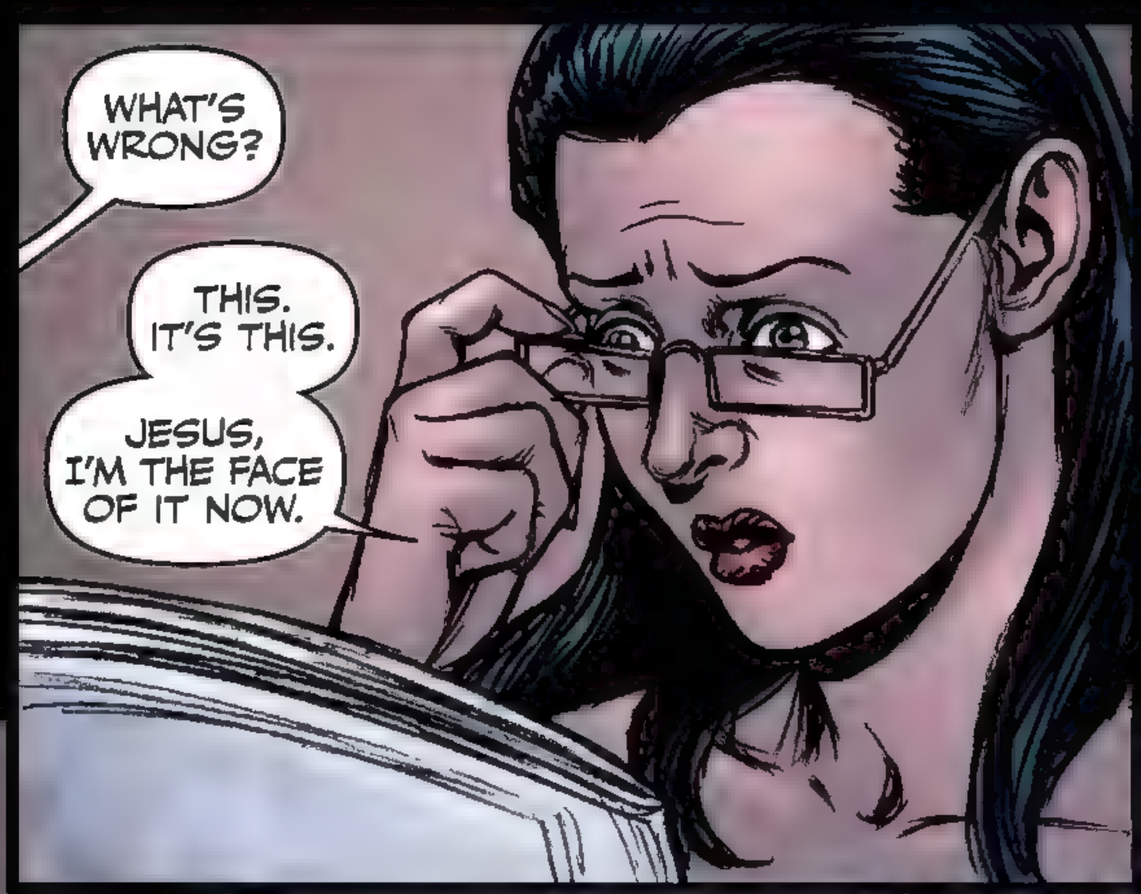


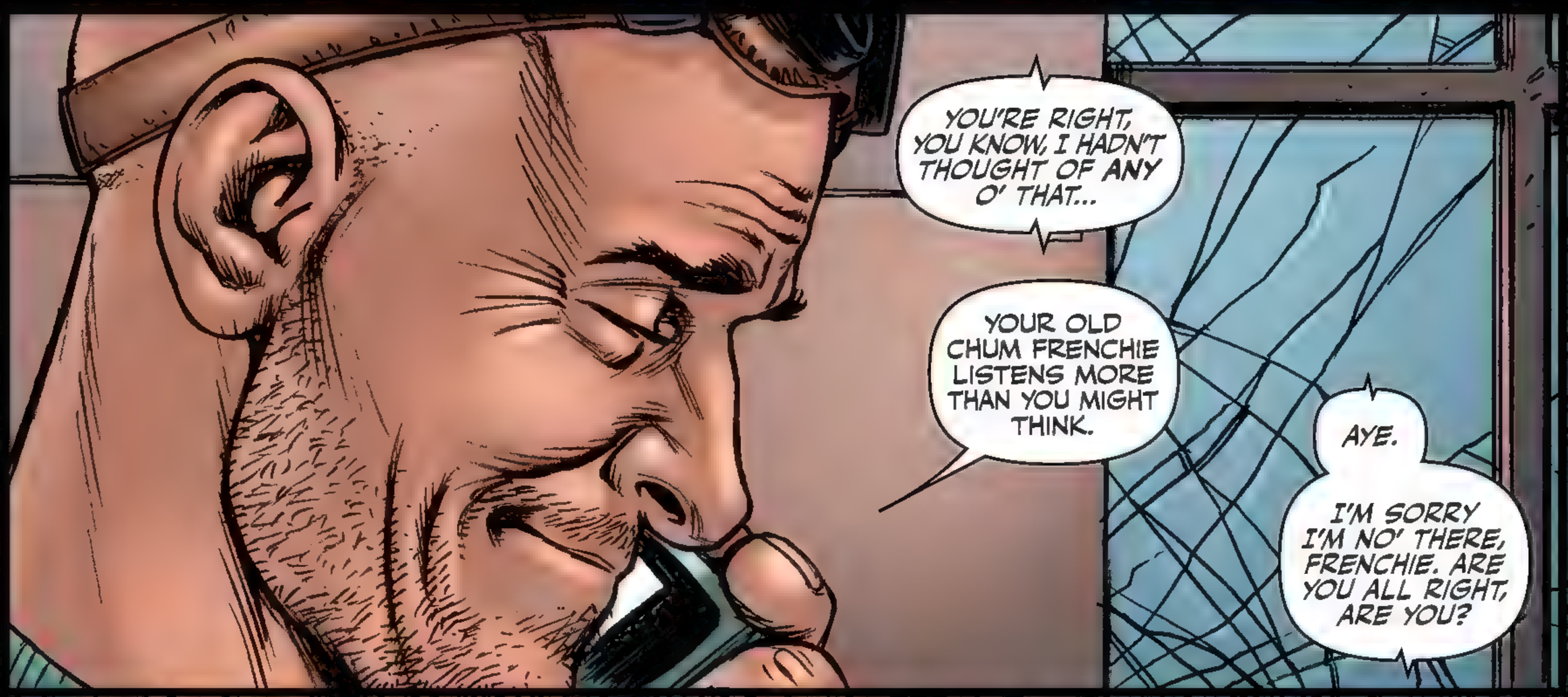
THE BLOODY DOORS OFF

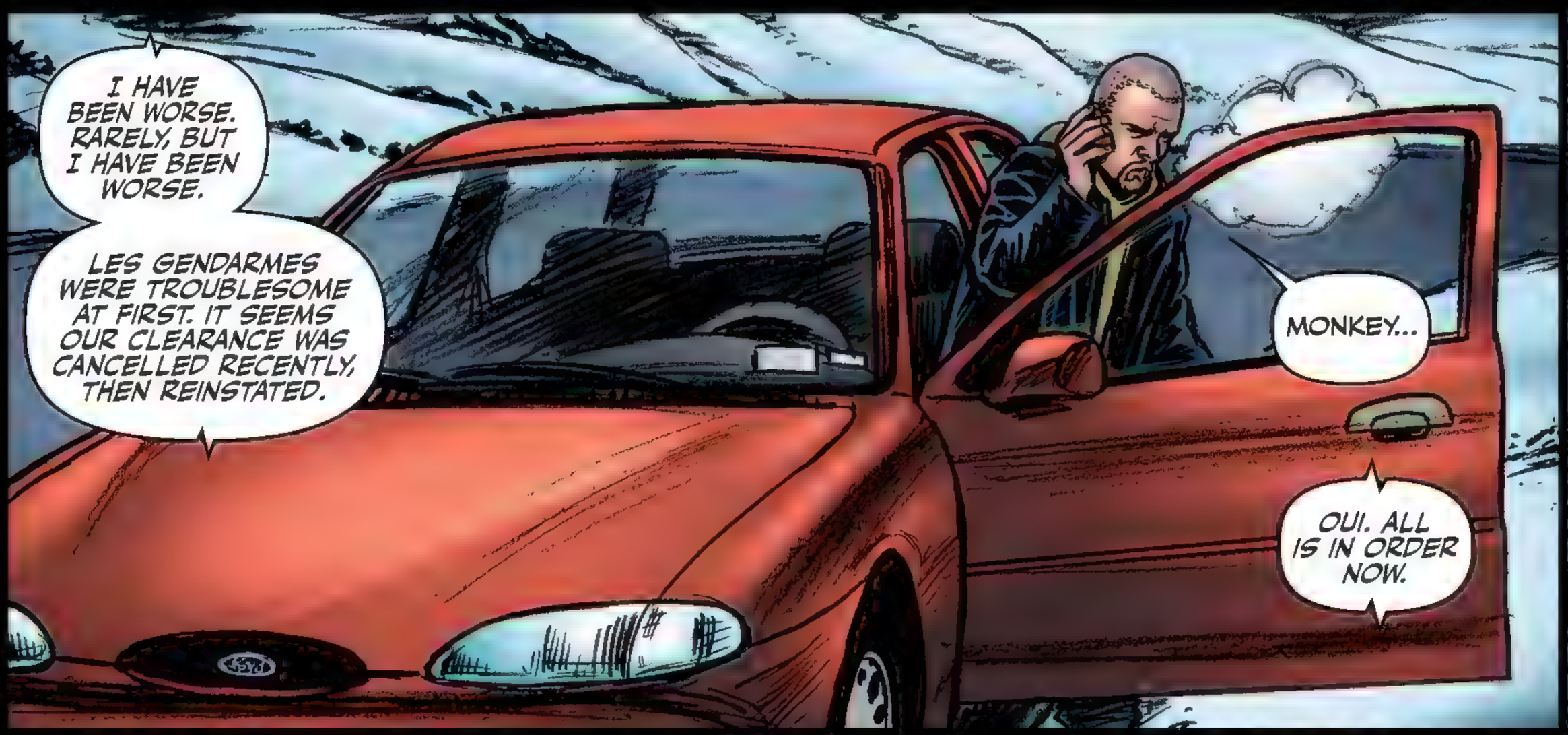
part four

FRENCHIE, YOU--YOU'RE NO'--
I AM AFRAID SO, MON BRAVE.
AW, NO.
AW, JESUS.
THAT'S IT, THEN. IT'S HIM. IT'S HIM AN' HE'S DOIN' IT.
WE CAN'T KEEP THIS TO OURSELVES NOW, WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO HAND OVER TO RAYNER, OR MONKEY--
PETIT HUGHIE, THAT IS NOT A GOOD IDEA.

EVEN NOW WE MUST THINK CLEARLY. THE BOYS ARE MEANT TO BE DENIABLE.
IF M'SIEU CHARCUTER HAS TRULY LEFT THE RAILS, AND MADAM RAYNER GETS TO HEAR ABOUT IT, SHE WILL PANIC. HER SENATE RUN BEGINS THIS YEAR, N'EST-CE PAS?

ONE CALL FROM HER AND WE ARE FUGITIVES FROM JUSTICE. DANGEROUS CRIMINALS. EVERY SWAT TEAM IN AMERICA WILL BE TOLD TO SHOOT ON SIGHT.
WE CAN EVADE OR FIGHT, BUT NOT WHILE HUNTING M'SIEU CHARCUTER. AND THE NOTION OF SUCH IGNORANT AMATEURS FINDING HIM, WITH TACTICS FROM THE FILMS OF M'SIEU BAY...
AW SHITE, IT'S US.
IT'S FUCKIN' GOT TO BE US.

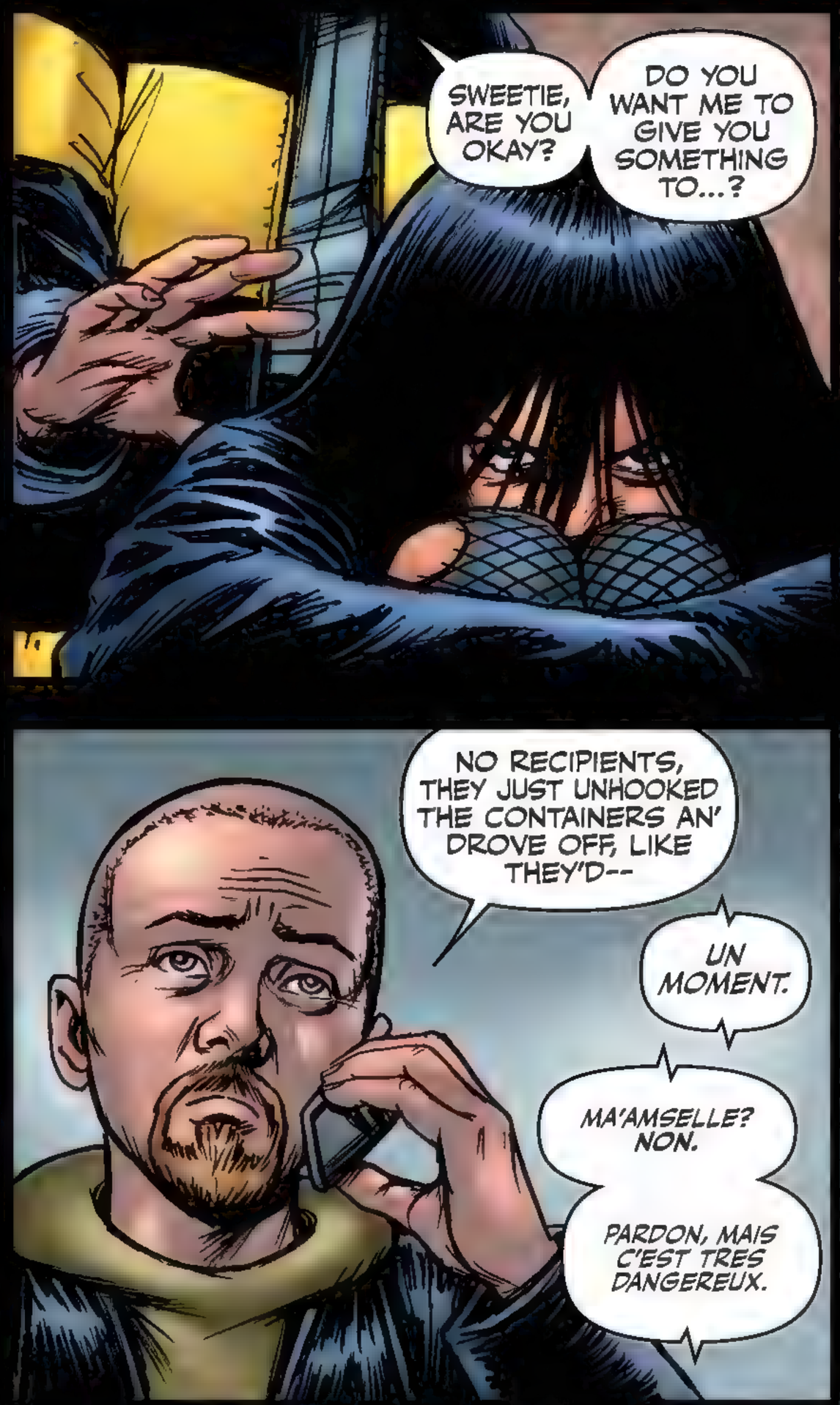

YOU'RE RIGHT, YOU KNOW, I HADN'T THOUGHT OF ANY O' THAT...
YOUR OLD CHUM FRENCHIE LISTENS MORE THAN YOU MIGHT THINK.
AYE.
I'M SORRY I'M NO' THERE, FRENCHIE. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, ARE YOU?

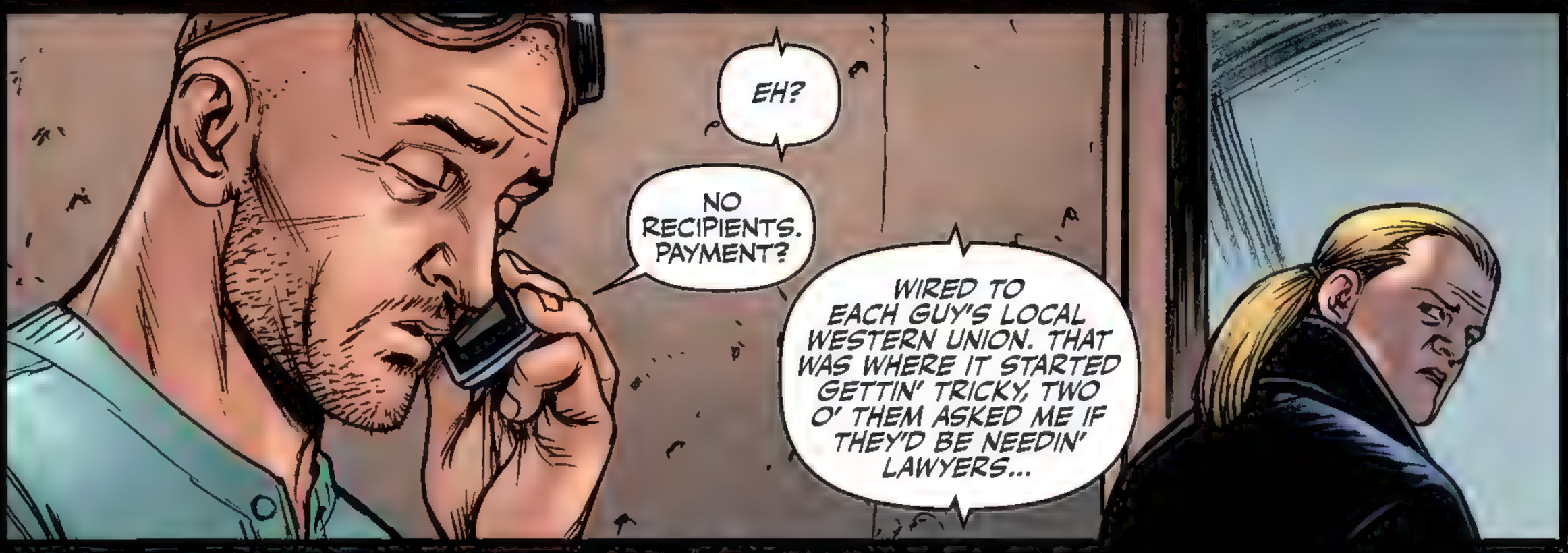

I HAVE BEEN WORSE. RARELY, BUT I HAVE BEEN WORSE.
LES GENDARMES WERE TROUBLESOME AT FIRST. IT SEEMS OUR CLEARANCE WAS CANCELLED RECENTLY, THEN REINSTATED.
MONKEY...
OUI. ALL IS IN ORDER NOW.

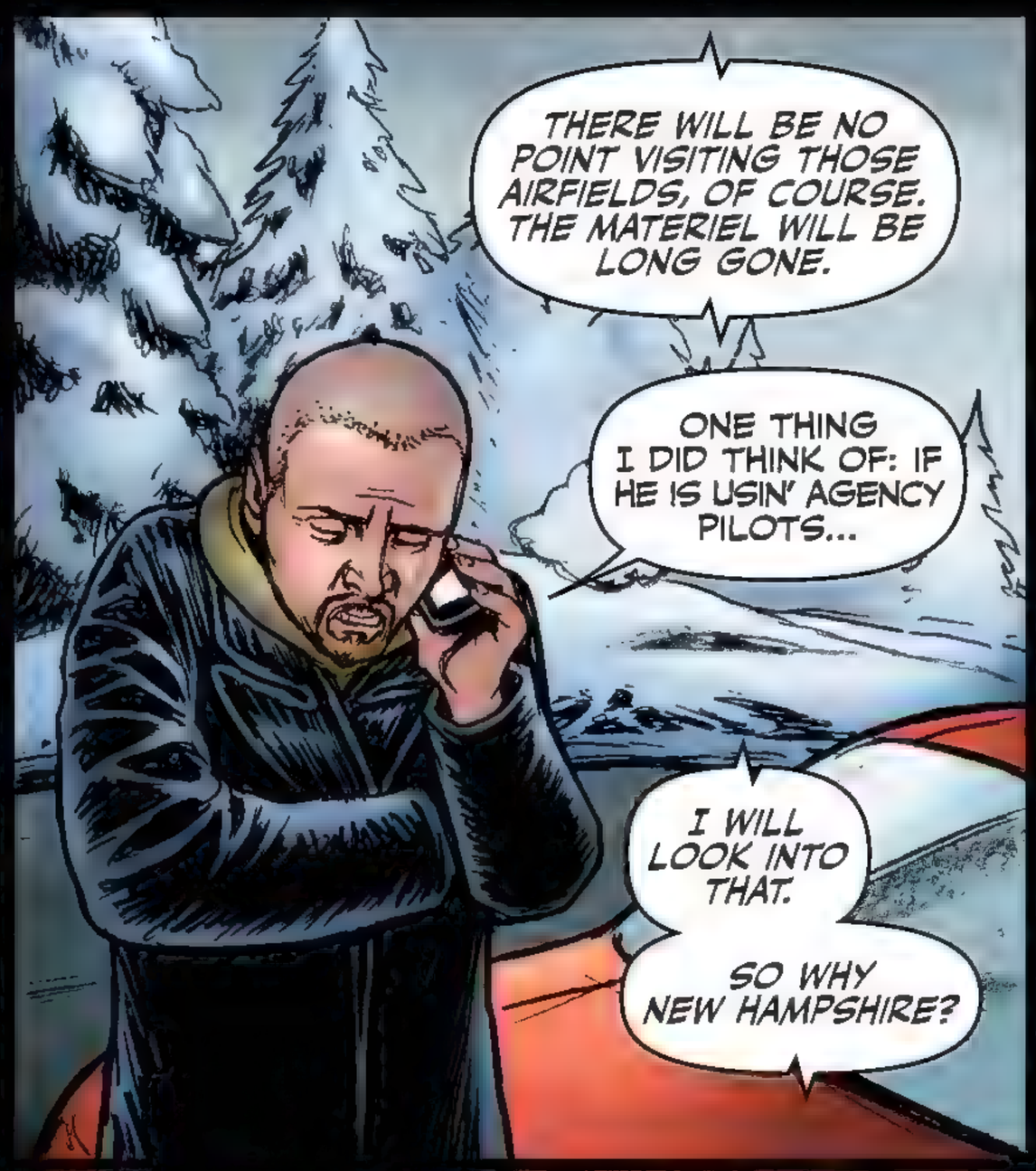
EXCEPT THAT IT WILL NEVER BE AGAIN.

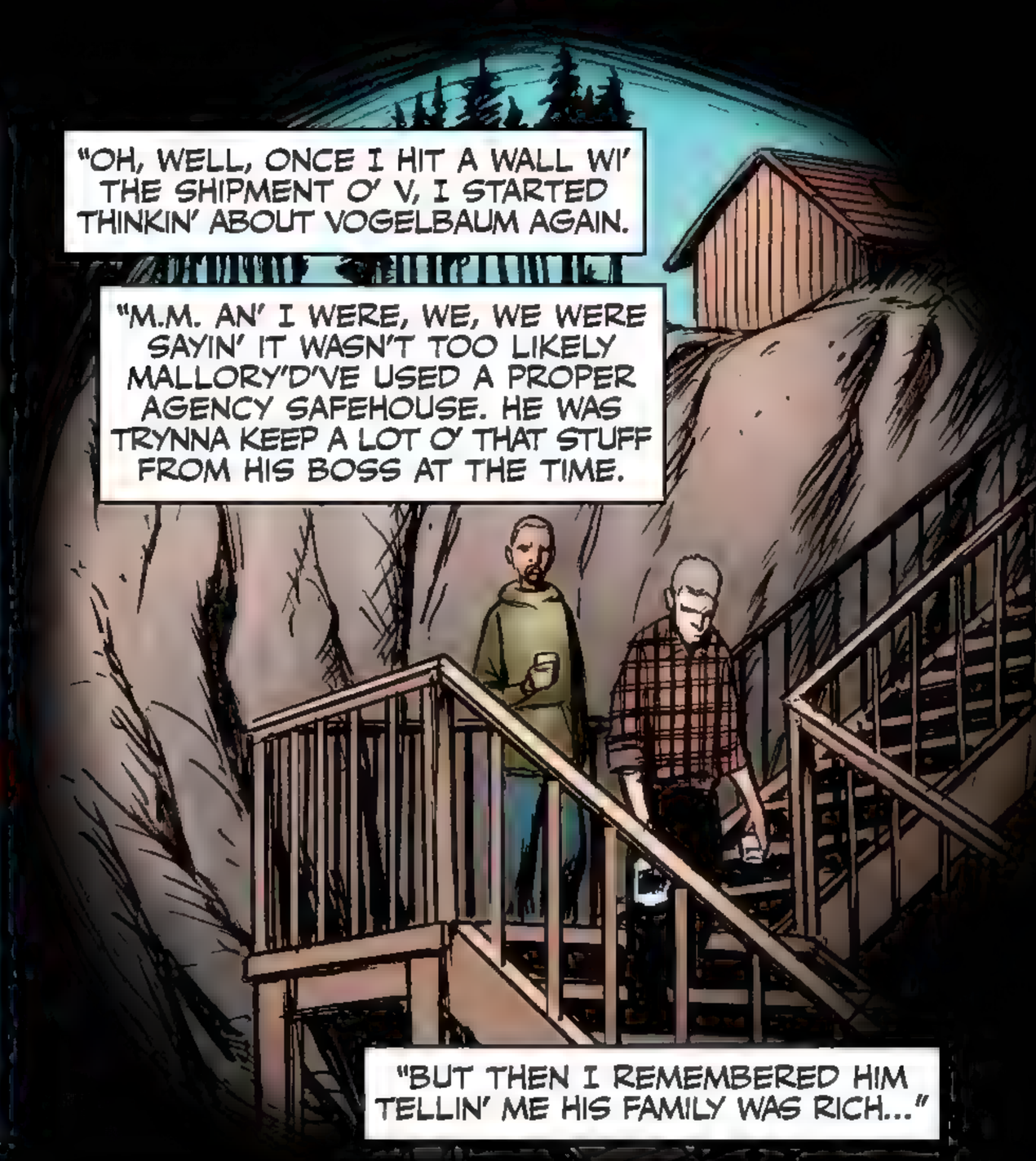
I'M...WELL, I'VE...I'M ACTUALLY UP IN NEW HAMPSHIRE, IF YOU CAN BELIEVE THAT. I'M IN THE MIDDLE O' THE GREEN MOUNTAINS, I DROVE ALL BLOODY NIGHT.
POURQUOI?

WELL.
FIRST OF ALL, THE D.M.V. WAS A DEAD LOSS. I GOT NUMBERS FOR A COUPLA THE TRUCKERS, BUT ALL THEY SAID WAS THEY DROVE THE STUFF FROM TAMPA TO WEE AIRFIELDS DOTTED AROUND THE COUNTRY. NEAR DALLAS, L.A., PORTLAND AN' BOSTON.
SWEETIE?

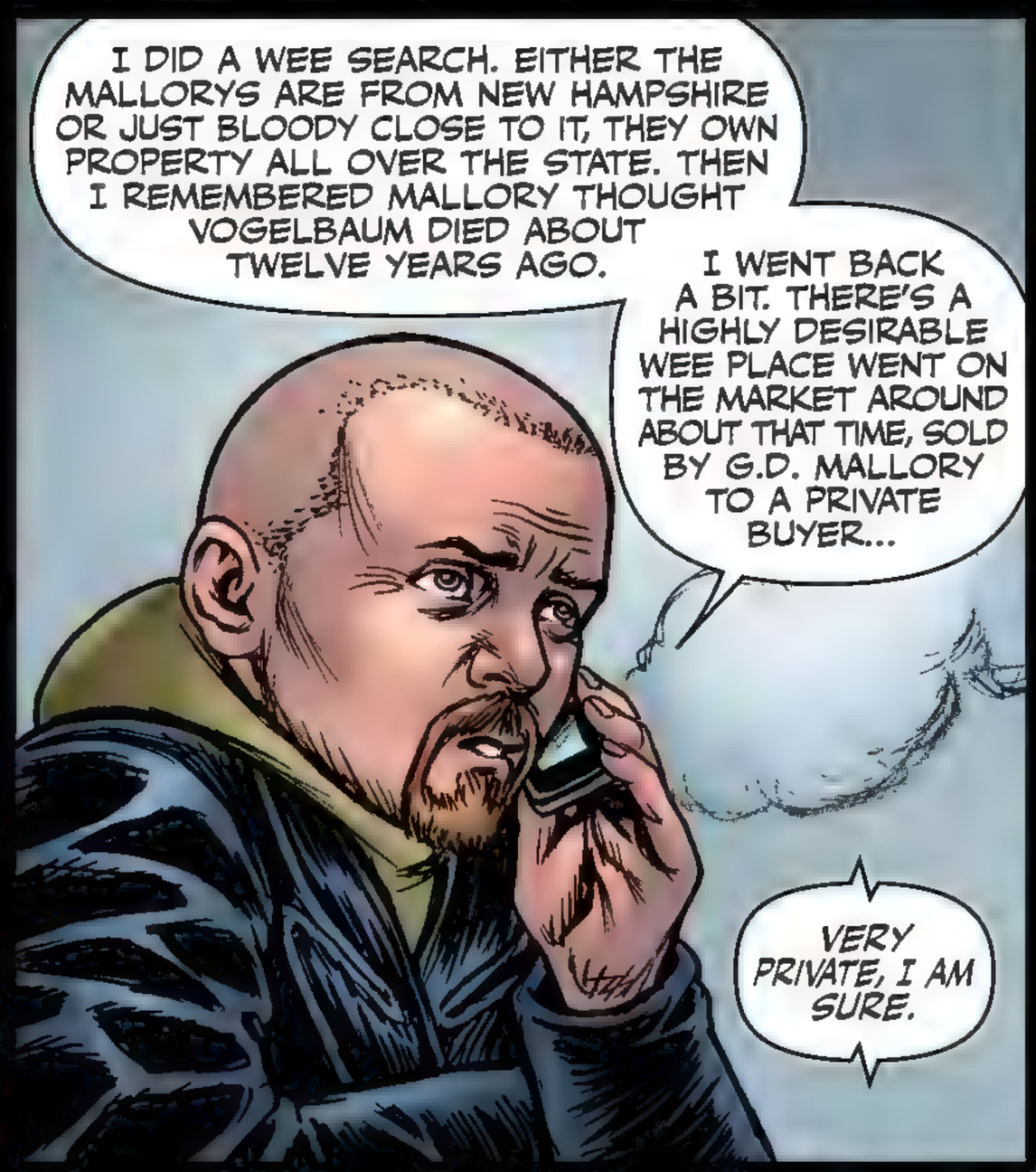

SWEETIE, ARE YOU OKAY?
DO YOU WANT ME TO GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO...?
NO RECIPIENTS, THEY JUST UNHOOKED THE CONTAINERS AN' DROVE OFF, LIKE THEY'D--
UN MOMENT.
MA'AMSELLE? NON.
PARDON, MAIS C'EST TRES DANGEREUX.

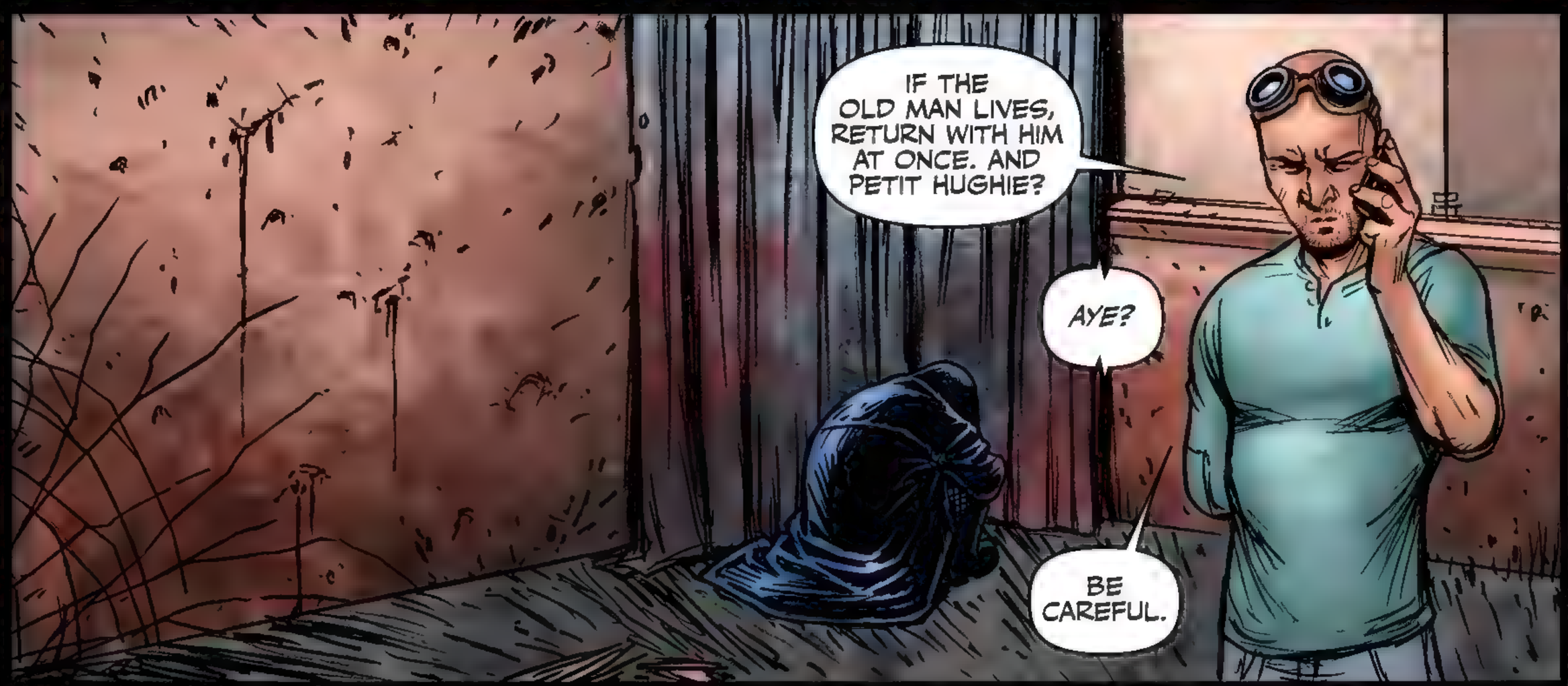

EH?
NO RECIPIENTS. PAYMENT?
WIRED TO EACH GUY'S LOCAL WESTERN UNION. THAT WAS WHERE IT STARTED GETTIN' TRICKY, TWO O' THEM ASKED ME IF THEY'D BE NEEDIN' LAWYERS...


THERE WILL BE NO POINT VISITING THOSE AIRFIELDS, OF COURSE. THE MATERIEL WILL BE LONG GONE.
ONE THING I DID THINK OF: IF HE IS USIN' AGENCY PILOTS...
I WILL LOOK INTO THAT.
SO WHY NEW HAMPSHIRE?


"OH, WELL, ONCE I HIT A WALL WI' THE SHIPMENT O' V, I STARTED THINKIN' ABOUT VOGELBAUM AGAIN.
"M.M. AN' I WERE, WE, WE WERE SAYIN' IT WASN'T TOO LIKELY MALLORY'D'VE USED A PROPER AGENCY SAFEHOUSE. HE WAS TRYNNA KEEP A LOT O' THAT STUFF FROM HIS BOSS AT THE TIME.
"BUT THEN I REMEMBERED HIM TELLIN' ME HIS FAMILY WAS RICH..."

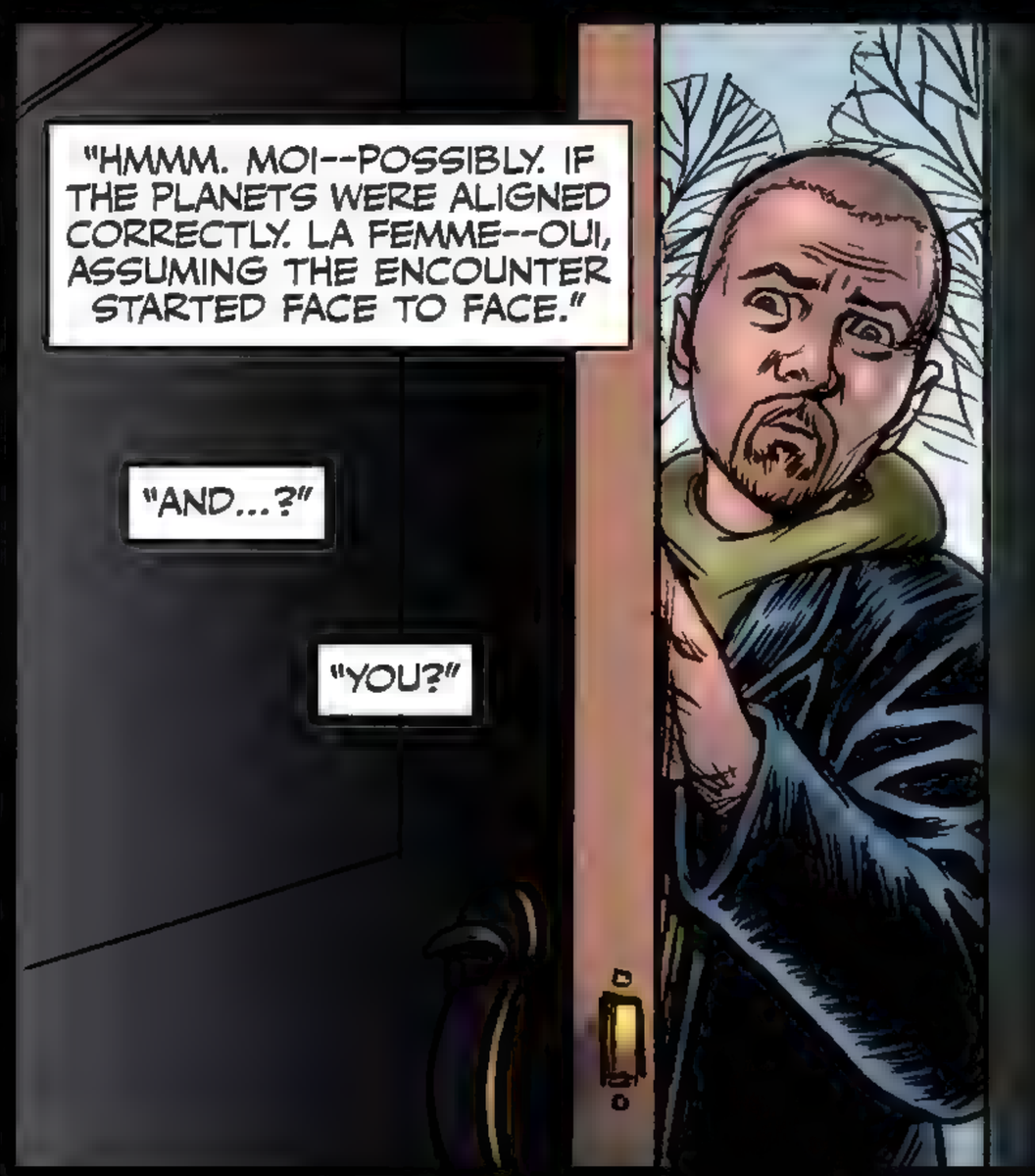
AN' I THOUGHT HANG ON, WHAT IF THE ARROGANT PRICK JUST BOUGHT A PLACE HIMSELF, OR USED ONE HE ALREADY OWNED...
AND LE COLONEL ATTENDED DARTMOUTH... WHICH IS IN...
I THOUGHT IT WAS WORTH A GO, AT LEAST.


I DID A WEE SEARCH. EITHER THE MALLORYS ARE FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE OR JUST BLOODY CLOSE TO IT, THEY OWN PROPERTY ALL OVER THE STATE. THEN I REMEMBERED MALLORY THOUGHT VOGELBAUM DIED ABOUT TWELVE YEARS AGO.
I WENT BACK A BIT. THERE'S A HIGHLY DESIRABLE WEE PLACE WENT ON THE MARKET AROUND ABOUT THAT TIME, SOLD BY G.D. MALLORY TO A PRIVATE BUYER...
VERY PRIVATE, I AM SURE.


IF THE OLD MAN LIVES, RETURN WITH HIM AT ONCE. AND PETIT HUGHIE?
AYE?
BE CAREFUL.

"AYE, FRENCHIE... THERE'S ONE OTHER THING I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT."

"OUI?"
"I'VE, UH, I'VE NO' BEEN ABLE TO STOP THINKIN' ABOUT IT SINCE ALL THIS STARTED. MAYBE EVEN BACK BEFORE THAT."
"SO...?"
"IF...IF IT REALLY CAME TO IT. LIKE IF THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY. WOULD WE BE ABLE TO... LIKE...*HANDLE* BUTCHER?"

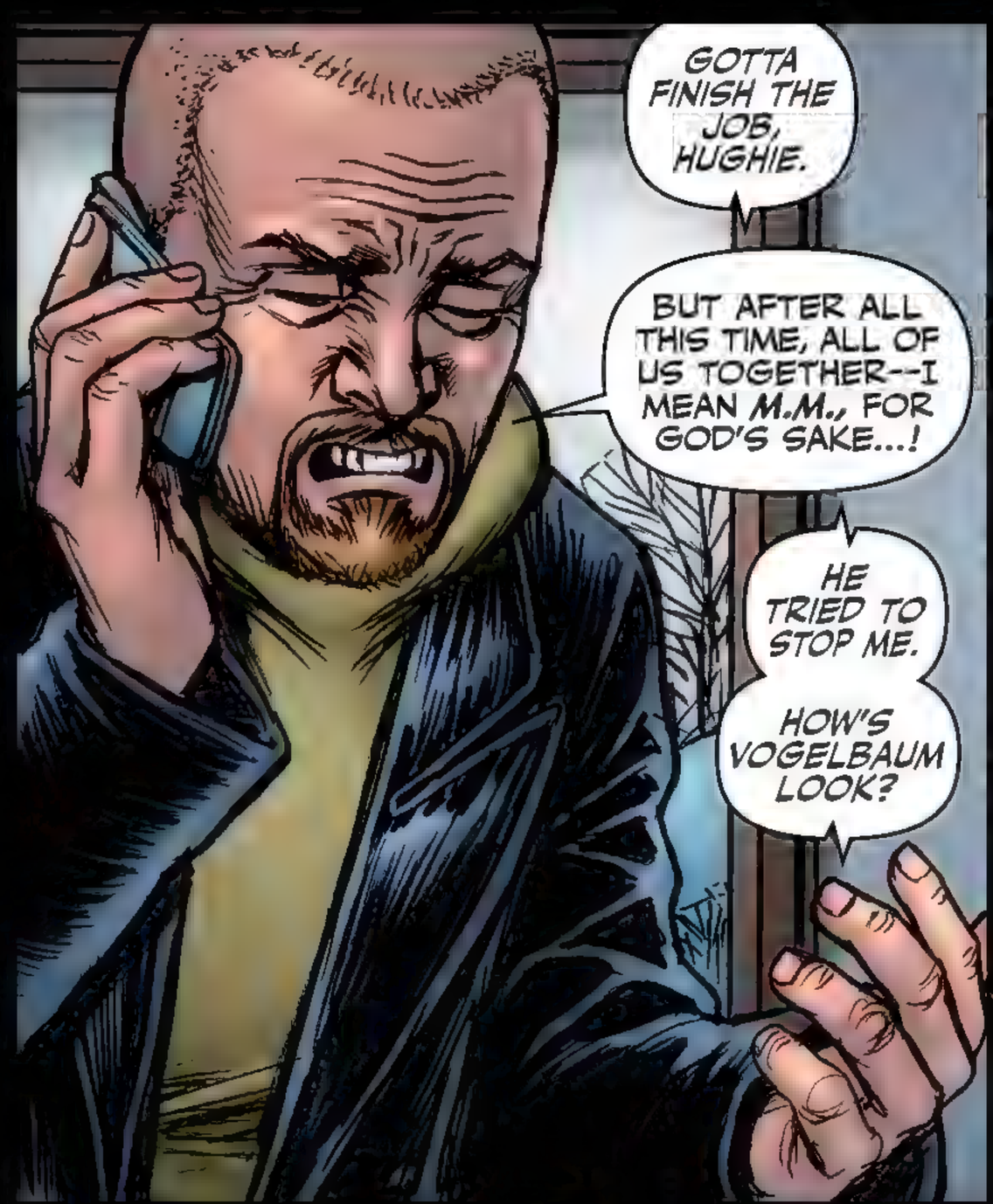

"HMMM. MOI--POSSIBLY. IF THE PLANETS WERE ALIGNED CORRECTLY. LA FEMME--OUI, ASSUMING THE ENCOUNTER STARTED FACE TO FACE."
"AND...?"
"YOU?"

"HE WOULD REMOVE YOUR ARMS AND LEGS AND RE-INSERT THEM IN THE WRONG SOCKETS."

WAAH!

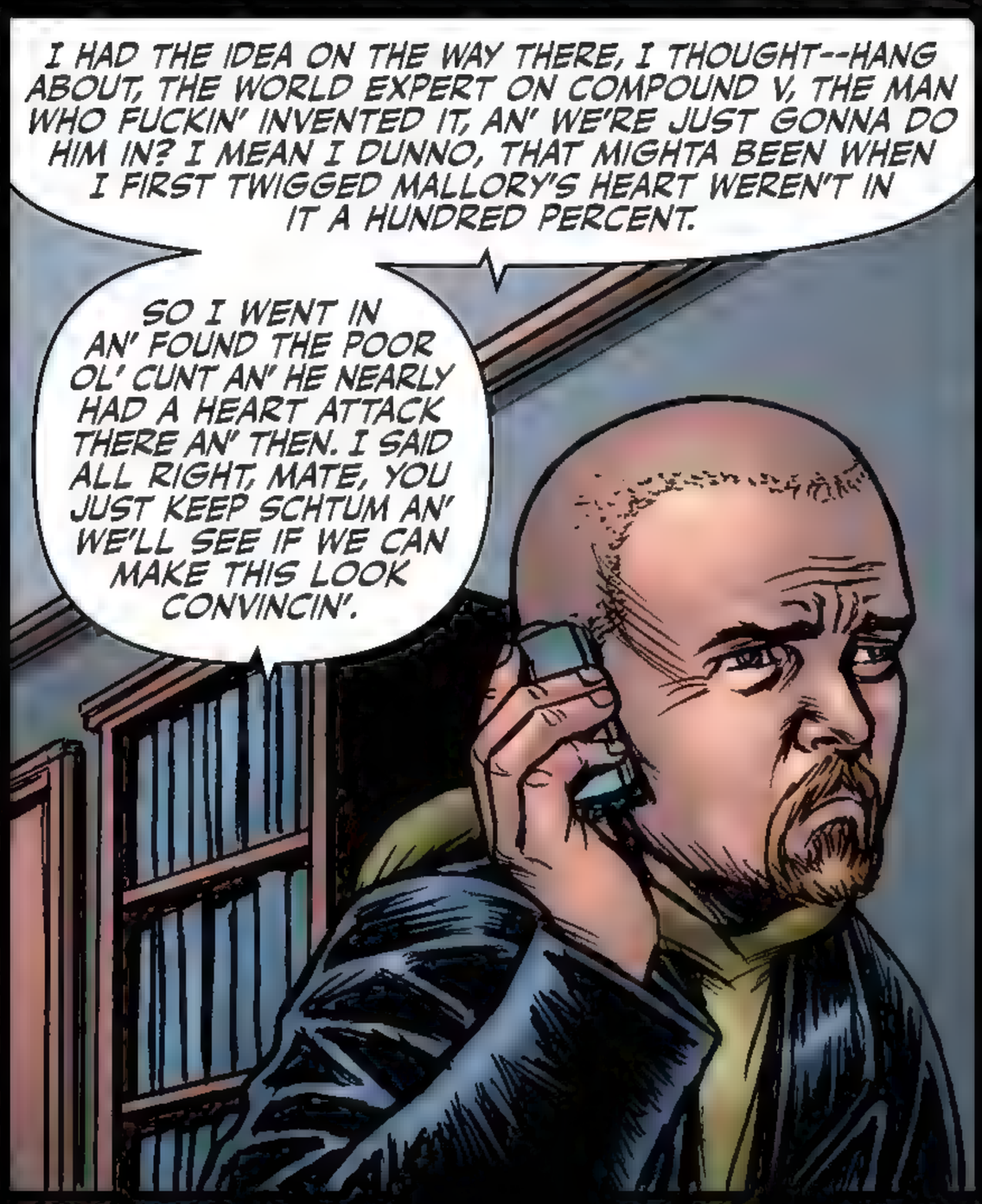
Butcher
mobile

HUH
HEL
YOU EVER BEEN HIT IN THE FACE, HUGHIE?
WH... WHAT...?
GOOD, HARD, SMACK IN THE MOUTH. YOU EVER HAD THAT?
WELL, UH... ONE O' THE G-WIZ FELLAS PUNCHED ME, THAT WAS PRETTY--
NAH, HE WAS A CUNT. I MEAN REALLY FUCKIN' HIT, LIKE WALLOP AN' YOU KNOW ALL ABOUT IT.
GETS YER ATTENTION, I CAN TELL YOU. LETS YOU KNOW WHERE YOU STAND. YOU LOOK THE OTHER BLOKE IN THE EYE AN' FUCK ME, THE TWO O' YOU ALMOST RESPECT EACH OTHER...
'COURSE, SOMEONE LIKE YOU, I THINK IT MIGHT JUST MAKE YOU MORE NERVOUS.
HAVE YOU FLINCHIN' TWICE AS MUCH, KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
LISTEN, WHY'RE YOU DOIN' THIS...?

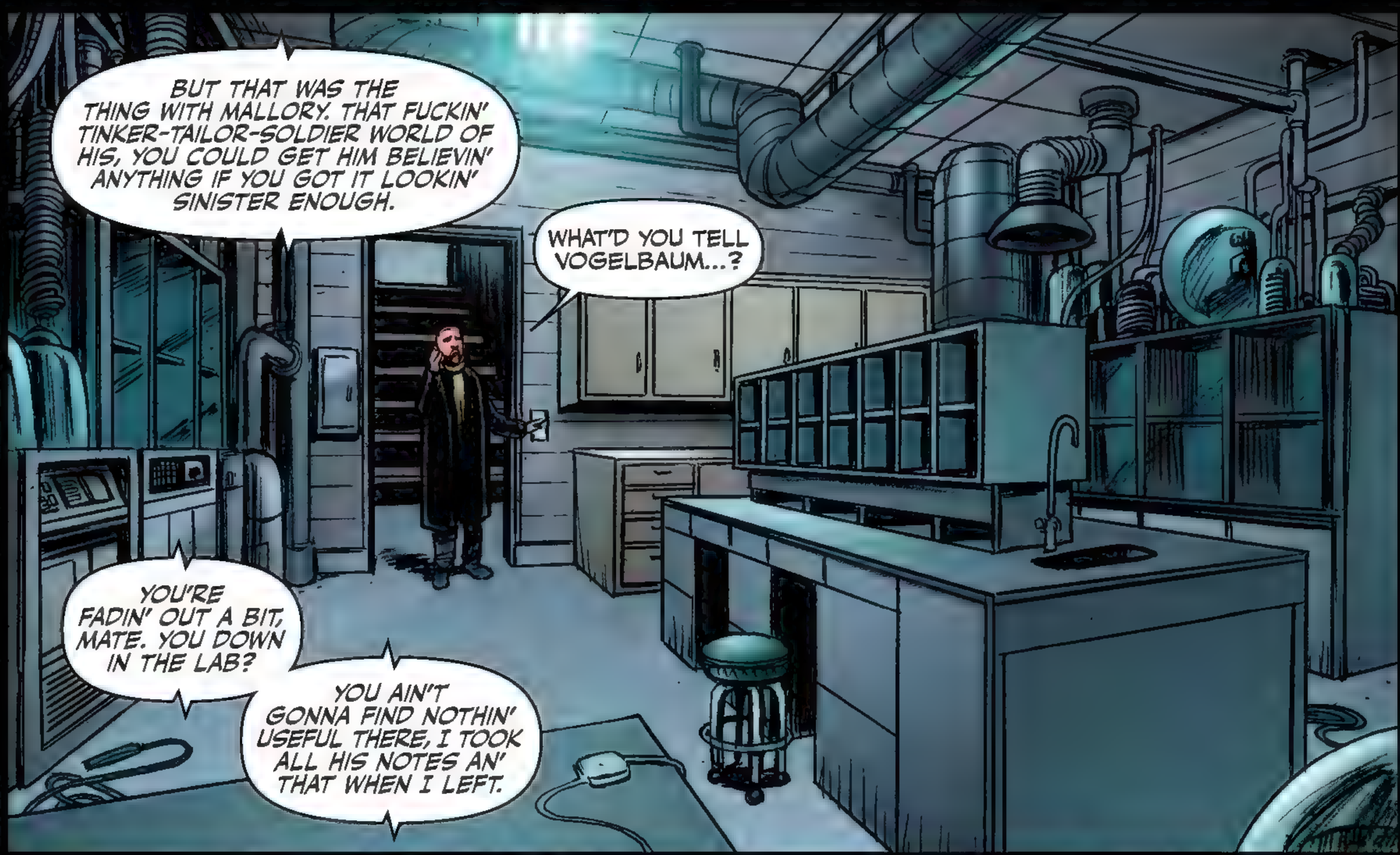

GOTTA FINISH THE JOB, HUGHIE.
BUT AFTER ALL THIS TIME, ALL OF US TOGETHER--I MEAN M.M., FOR GOD'S SAKE...!
HE TRIED TO STOP ME.
HOW'S VOGELBAUM LOOK?

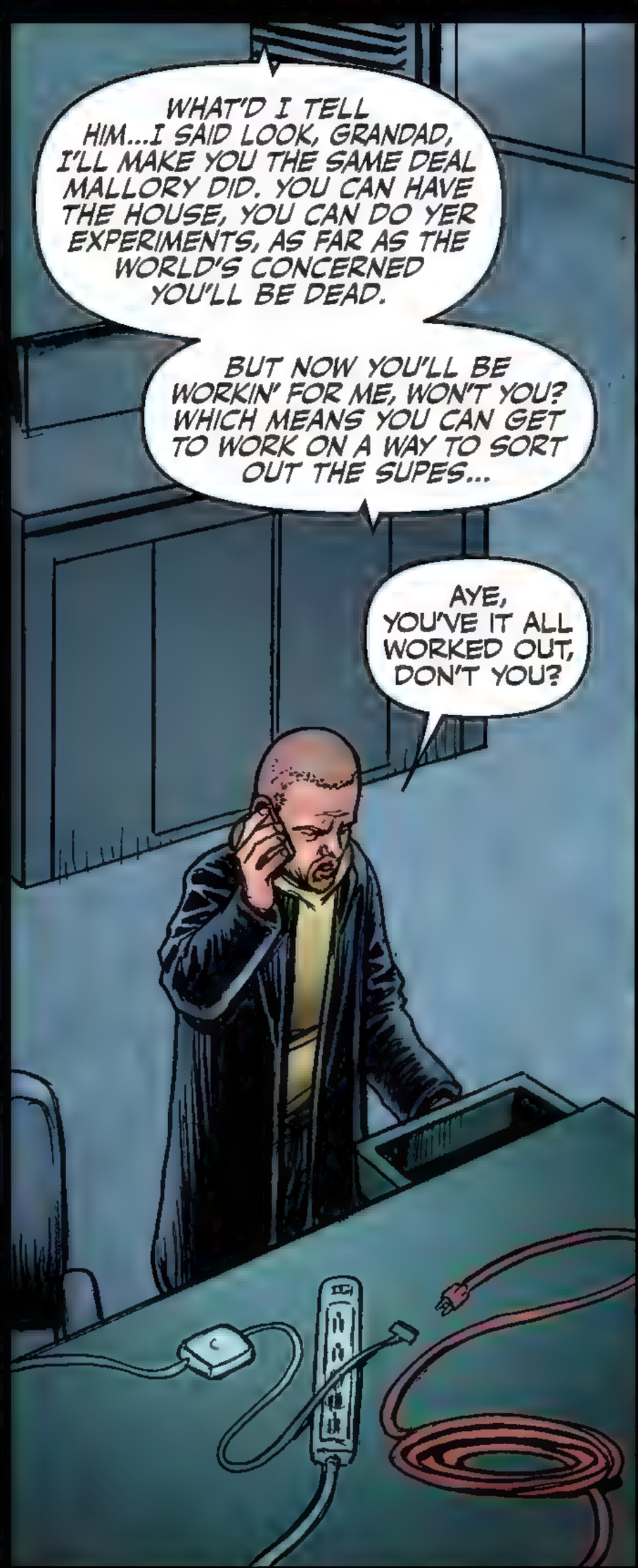
HE... WELL, HE...
UM... NO' TEN YEARS DEAD, ANYWAY, I SUPPOSE.
NOT A HUNDRED AN' THIRTEEN, NEITHER. AMAZIN' WHAT A FEW SHOTS O' V CAN DO FOR A BLOKE.
WHAT'D MALLORY TELL YOU HAPPENED TO HIM, JUST AS A MATTER OF INTEREST?

HE, HE SAID YOU BIT HIS THROAT OUT. HE SAW YOU COME OUT THE HOUSE AN' SPIT A LUMP O' MEAT IN THE DRIVEWAY.
HA HA HA HA, IT WAS FUCKIN' RASPBERRY JAM...!


I HAD THE IDEA ON THE WAY THERE, I THOUGHT--HANG ABOUT, THE WORLD EXPERT ON COMPOUND V, THE MAN WHO FUCKIN' INVENTED IT, AN' WE'RE JUST GONNA DO HIM IN? I MEAN I DUNNO, THAT MIGHTA BEEN WHEN I FIRST TWIGGED MALLORY'S HEART WEREN'T IN IT A HUNDRED PERCENT.
SO I WENT IN AN' FOUND THE POOR OL' CUNT AN' HE NEARLY HAD A HEART ATTACK THERE AN' THEN. I SAID ALL RIGHT, MATE, YOU JUST KEEP SCHTUM AN' WE'LL SEE IF WE CAN MAKE THIS LOOK CONVINCIN'.

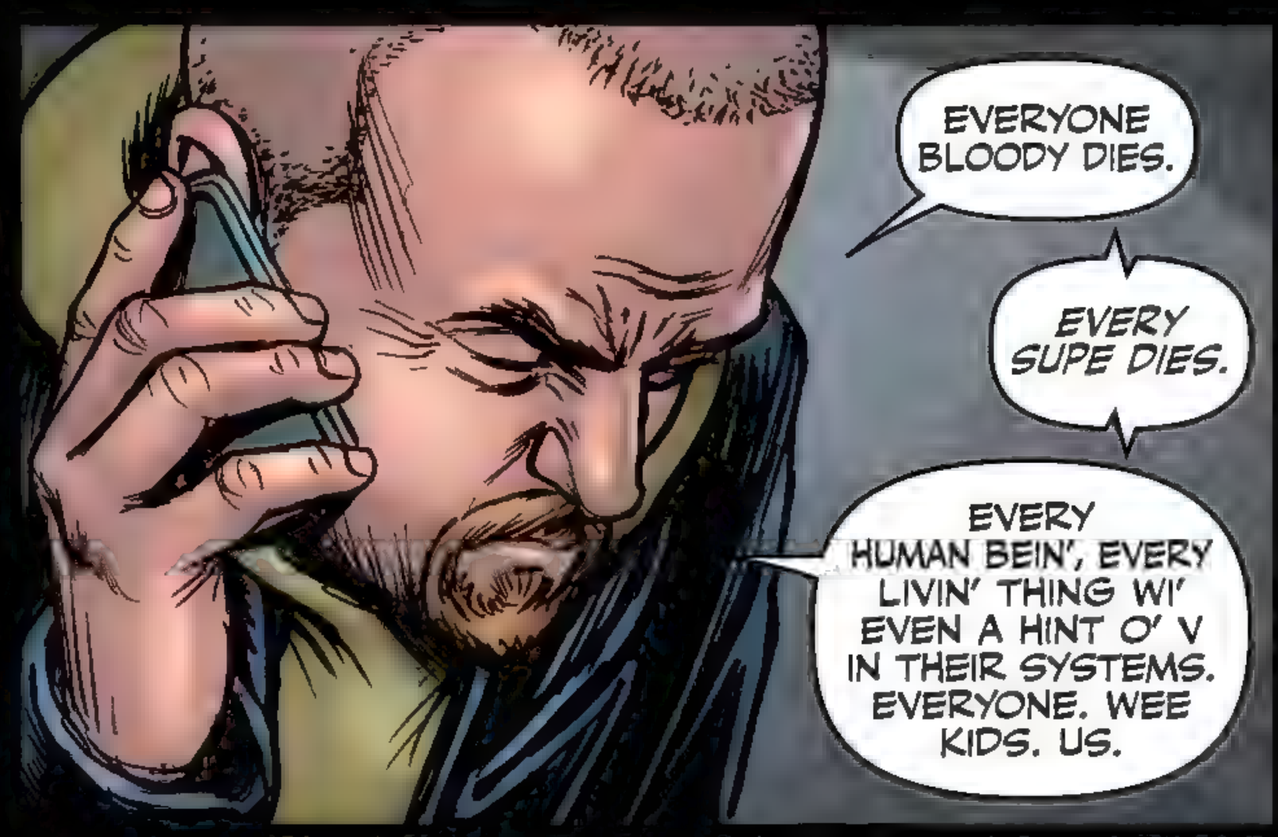
I FOUND THE JAM IN THE FRIDGE.
BIT HIS THROAT OUT, FOR FUCK'S SAKE...!


BUT THAT WAS THE THING WITH MALLORY. THAT FUCKIN' TINKER-TAILOR-SOLDIER WORLD OF HIS, YOU COULD GET HIM BELIEVIN' ANYTHING IF YOU GOT IT LOOKIN' SINISTER ENOUGH.
WHAT'D YOU TELL VOGELBAUM...?
YOU'RE FADIN' OUT A BIT, MATE. YOU DOWN IN THE LAB?
YOU AIN'T GONNA FIND NOTHIN' USEFUL THERE, I TOOK ALL HIS NOTES AN' THAT WHEN I LEFT.


WHAT'D I TELL HIM...I SAID LOOK, GRANDAD, I'LL MAKE YOU THE SAME DEAL MALLORY DID. YOU CAN HAVE THE HOUSE, YOU CAN DO YER EXPERIMENTS, AS FAR AS THE WORLD'S CONCERNED YOU'LL BE DEAD.
BUT NOW YOU'LL BE WORKIN' FOR ME, WON'T YOU? WHICH MEANS YOU CAN GET TO WORK ON A WAY TO SORT OUT THE SUPES...
AYE, YOU'VE IT ALL WORKED OUT, DON'T YOU?

WELL, I'VE BEEN THINKIN' ABOUT IT FOR QUITE A WHILE. STASHED AWAY ALL THE BITS AN' PIECES I THOUGHT I MIGHT NEED.
LIKE FUCKIN' D.U. WARHEADS FOR AN R.P.G.-7?
LISTEN TO YOU WITH ALL THE TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW!
YEAH, THINGS LIKE THAT. AN' LISTEN, I DUNNO HOW FAR ALONG YOU ARE WITH THIS, BUT I DIDN'T USE C.I.A. PILOTS TO FLY THE STUFF EVERYWHERE.
I MEAN I USED COMPANY MONEY, YEAH, BUT I HIRED PRIVATE PILOTS--SORT O' BLOKES KNOW NOT TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FUNNY BIG CRATES THEY HAVE TO DROP OFF. SO YOU AIN'T GOT A HOPE O' TRACIN' THEM BEFORE THE BIG DAY.

I KNOW YOU'RE GONNA TELL ME THE REST OF IT...
I.E.D.S, HIDDEN ALL OVER THE WORLD. CHAIN DETONATION, SUPPOSED TO...HANG ON, I GOT HIM TO WRITE IT DOWN FOR ME.
FORTY PERCENT ATMOSPHERIC COVERAGE INSIDE THE FIRST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS. WIND, CURRENTS AN' THE FOOD CHAIN'RE MEANT TO TAKE CARE O' THE REST.
COMPLETELY EFFECTIVE IN... SIX OR SEVEN MONTHS.


EVERYONE BLOODY DIES.
EVERY SUPE DIES.
EVERY HUMAN BEIN', EVERY LIVIN' THING WI' EVEN A HINT O' V IN THEIR SYSTEMS. EVERYONE. WEE KIDS. US.

FOR FUCK'S SAKE, YOU'RE OUTTA YER MIND! YOU'RE MAKIN' YERSELF INTO A MONSTER! YOU'RE MAD!
I'M DOIN' WHAT HAS TO BE DONE, HUGHIE.
THEY'RE A STAIN ON THE WORLD. A FUCKIN' CANCER.

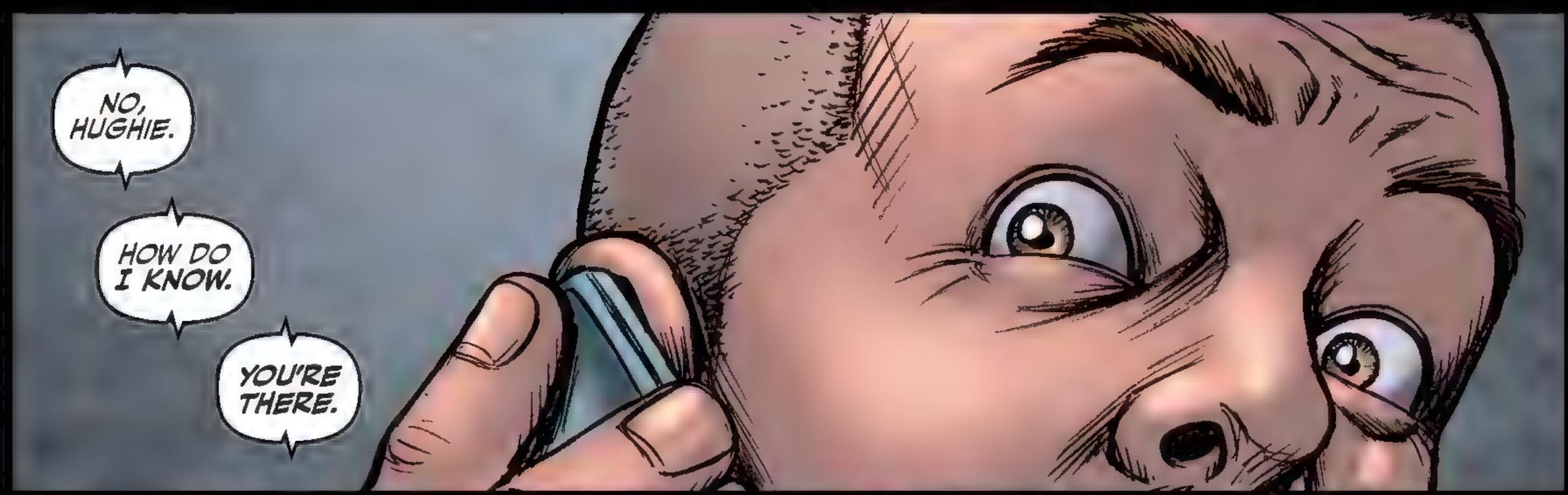
NO THEY'RE NO', THEY'RE JUST WANKERS...!
LOOK, I KNOW THEY WENT A BIT OUTTA CONTROL, BUT--
A BIT WHAT? HAVE YOU BEEN PAYIN' ATTENTION FOR THE LAST TWO BLEEDIN' YEARS?

OH, JESUS. WHY DID YOU BRING ME INTO THIS, IF ALL YOU WERE GONNA DO ALL ALONG WAS...?
IT'S FUCKIN' EVIL BEYOND DESCRIPTION. IT'S DESPICABLE. IT'S LIKE THE NAZIS KILLIN' THE JEWS OR WHATEVER, JUST WIPIN' EVERYBODY OUT...!
MORE LIKE THE JEWS KILLIN' THE NAZIS, IF YOU STOP AN' THINK ABOUT IT.

THE JEWS WOULDN'T'VE KILLED LOADS AN' LOADS OF INNOCENT FOLK WHILE THEY WERE AT IT...!
WOULDN'T THEY?
THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH GETTIN' RID O' THE REAL CUNTS, MATE. YOU'VE GOTTA BURN 'EM OUT.

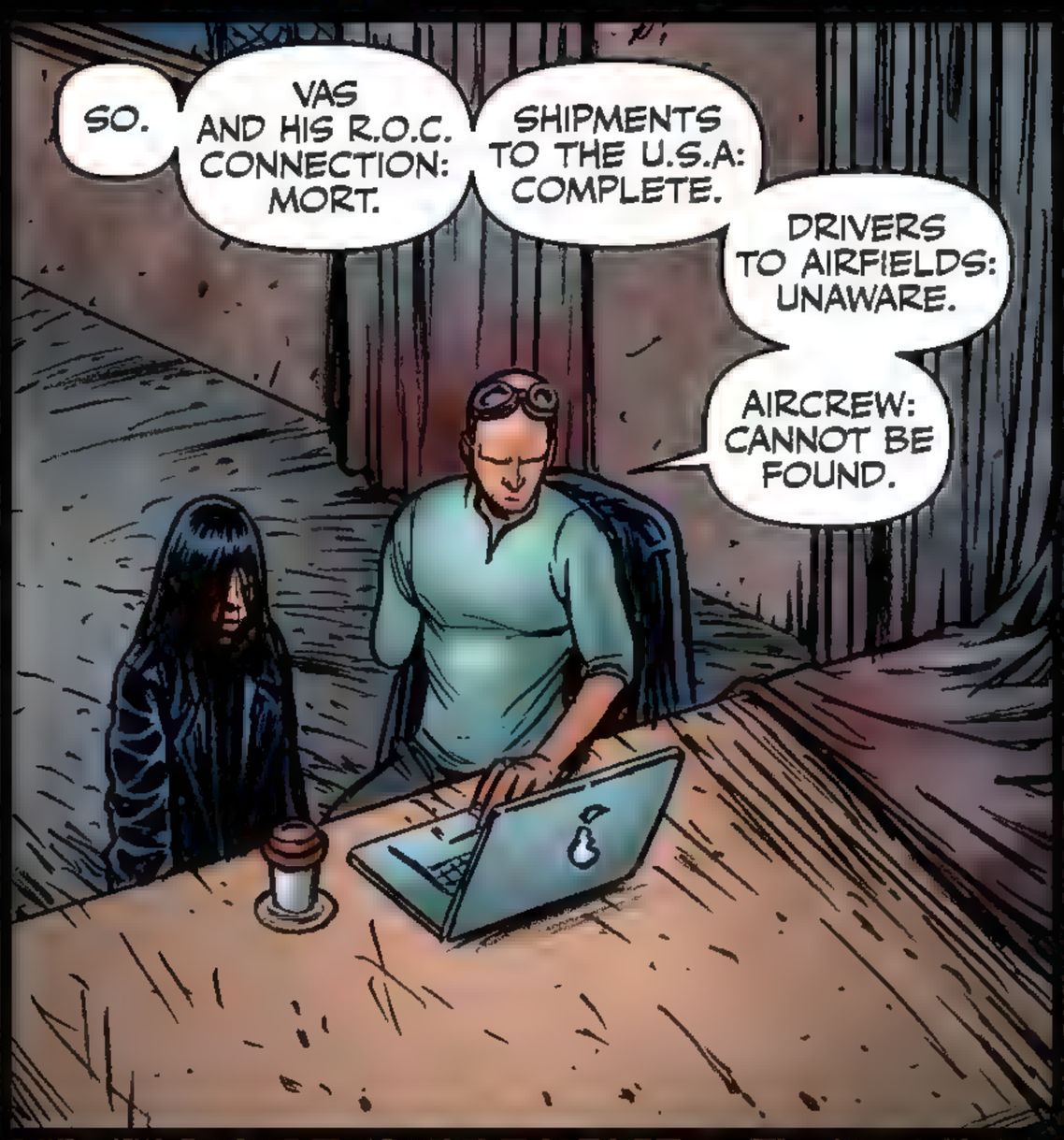
HEH. YOU REALLY ARE FUCKIN' HOPELESS, AIN'T YOU, HUGHIE?
ALL THAT INSIDER GEN MALLORY GAVE YOU, EVERYTHING ELSE YOU'VE LEARNED IN THIS BLOODY JOB, AN' YOU CAN'T DO FUCK ALL WITH IT. IT'S LIKE IT'S SHIT IN YOUR HANDS.
WHEN SOMEONE GIVES YOU A WEAPON, SON: YOU USE IT.

I DUNNO.
ALL RIGHT, TRY THIS ONE ON FOR SIZE. HOW DO I KNOW YOU'RE THERE?
EH?
I'M STANDIN' HERE TALKIN' TO YOU...I'M...

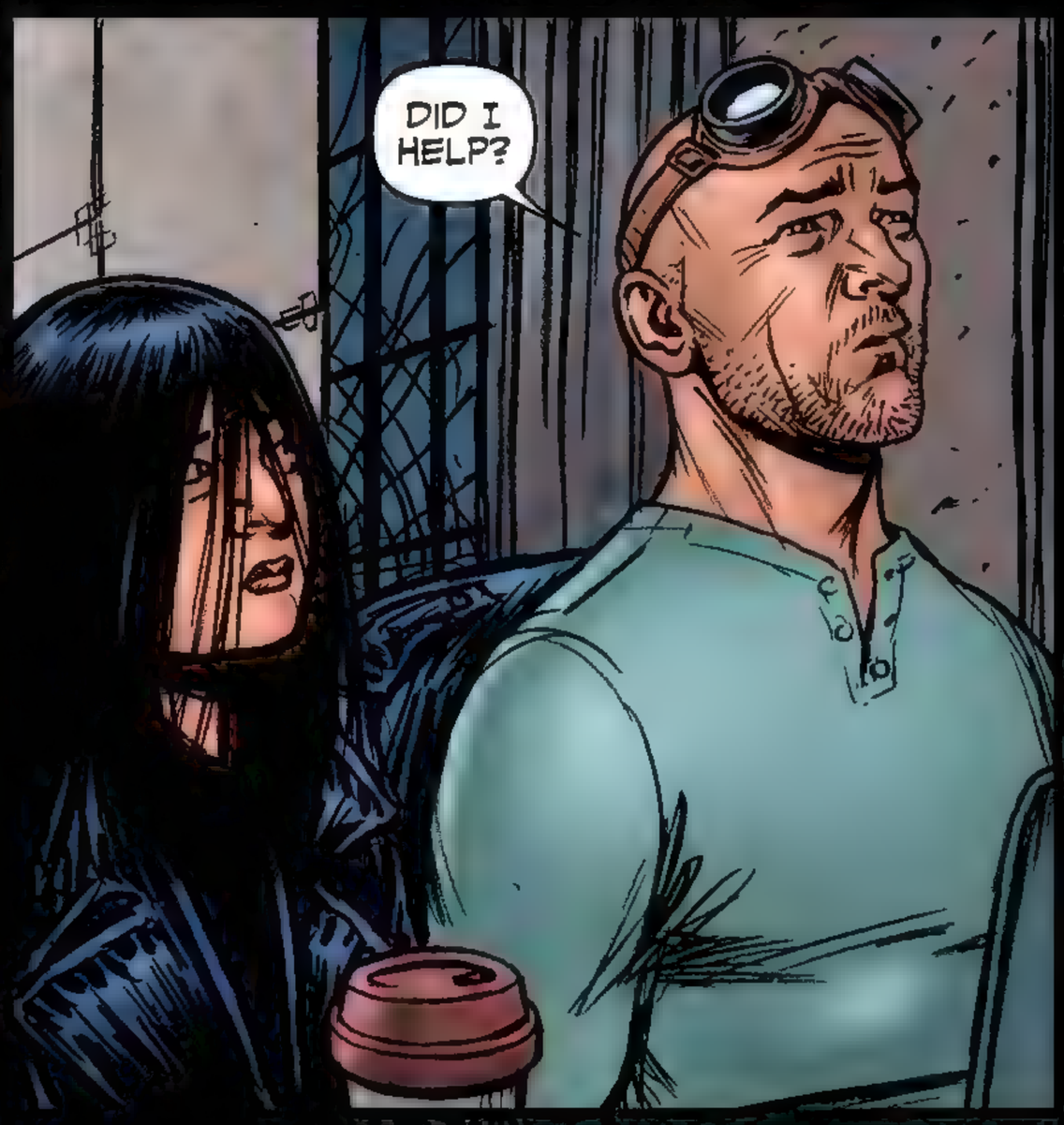

NO, HUGHIE.
HOW DO I KNOW.
YOU'RE THERE.

...ET LES TACOS DE POULET POUR LA FEMME. MM? AH...SURPRISE ME.
ALL YOU ARE GOOD FOR? QU'EST-CE QUE C'EST?
OUI. MM. OUI, OUI. MM-HMM.
DID YOU LITERALLY PISS YOURSELF?
WELL, THEN YOU ARE NOT COMPLETELY COWARDLY. AND AS FOR USELESS--THE MAN WAS DEAD, HIS NOTES WERE GONE. THAT HE CAN TELL US NOTHING IS NOT YOUR FAULT; YOU HAD THE THOUGHT TOO LATE, BUT NOTHING OF THE KIND OCCURRED TO ME AT ALL.
GARCON ETRANGE.

HMH.


SO.
VAS AND HIS R.O.C. CONNECTION: MORT.
SHIPMENTS TO THE U.S.A: COMPLETE.
DRIVERS TO AIRFIELDS: UNAWARE.
AIRCREW: CANNOT BE FOUND.

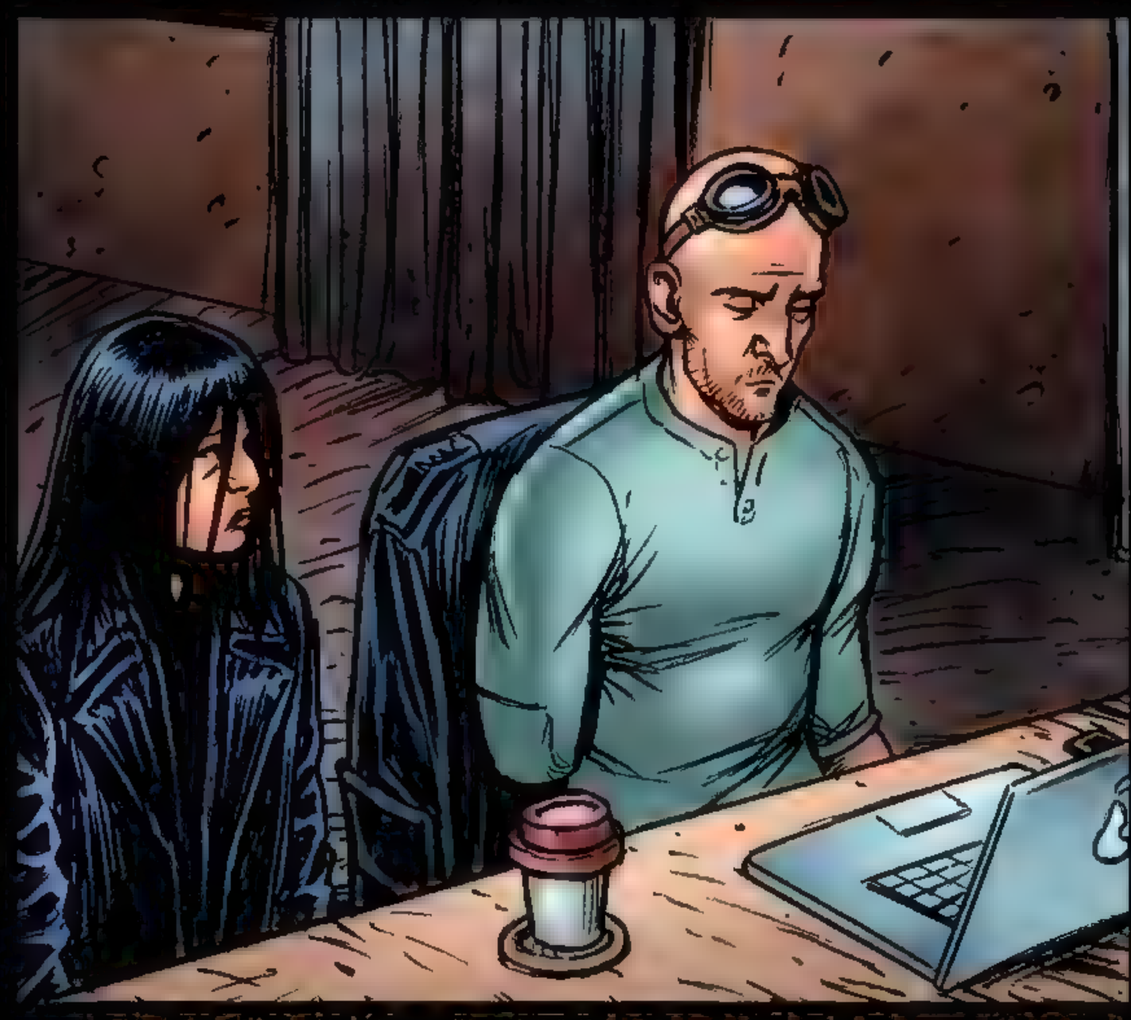
VOGELBAUM: MORT.
LA LEGENDE, VOTRE NUMBER ONE SOURCE: MORT.
LAIT DE LA MERE, LE GRAND DETECTIVE: MORT.
LE SINGE: WILL PANIC IN AN INSTANT.


DID I HELP?

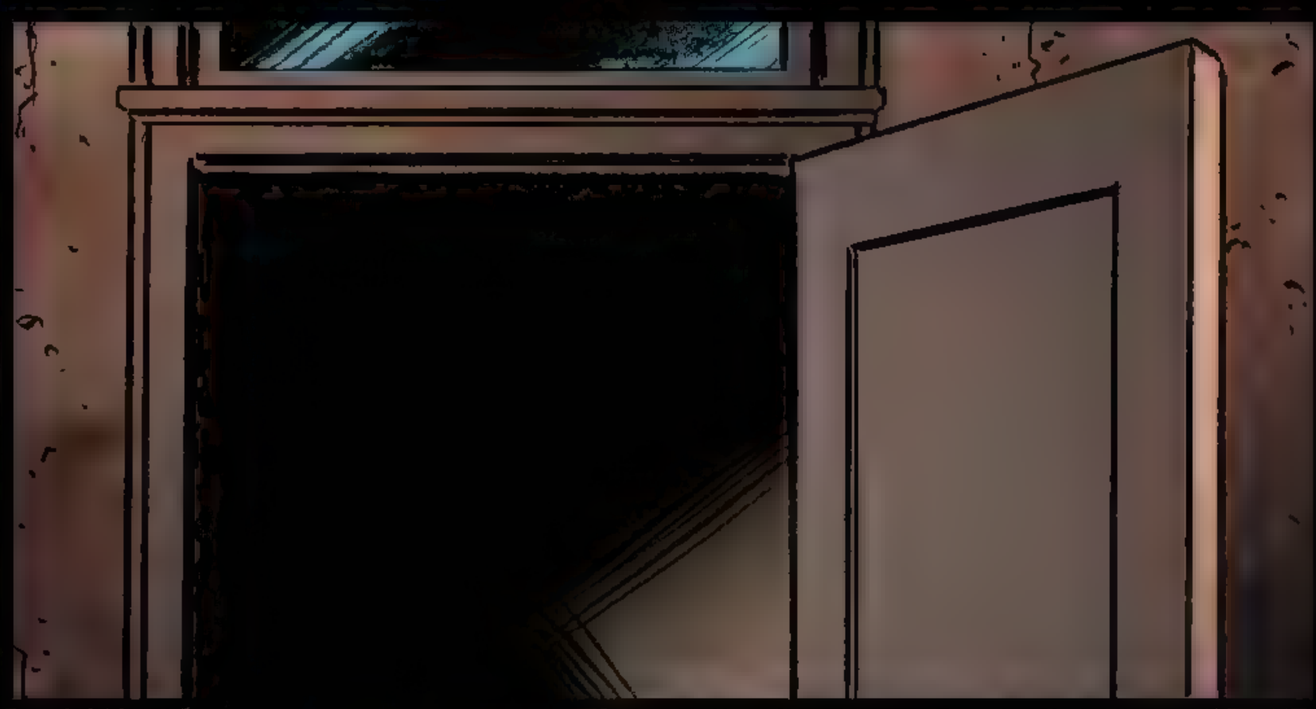
MOST SECRET
USERNAME:
PASSWORD:
CONFIRM:
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
LET ME HELP, I SAID, AND SMILED AND GESTURED.
I HELPED YOU BE A PART OF WHAT WE WERE.

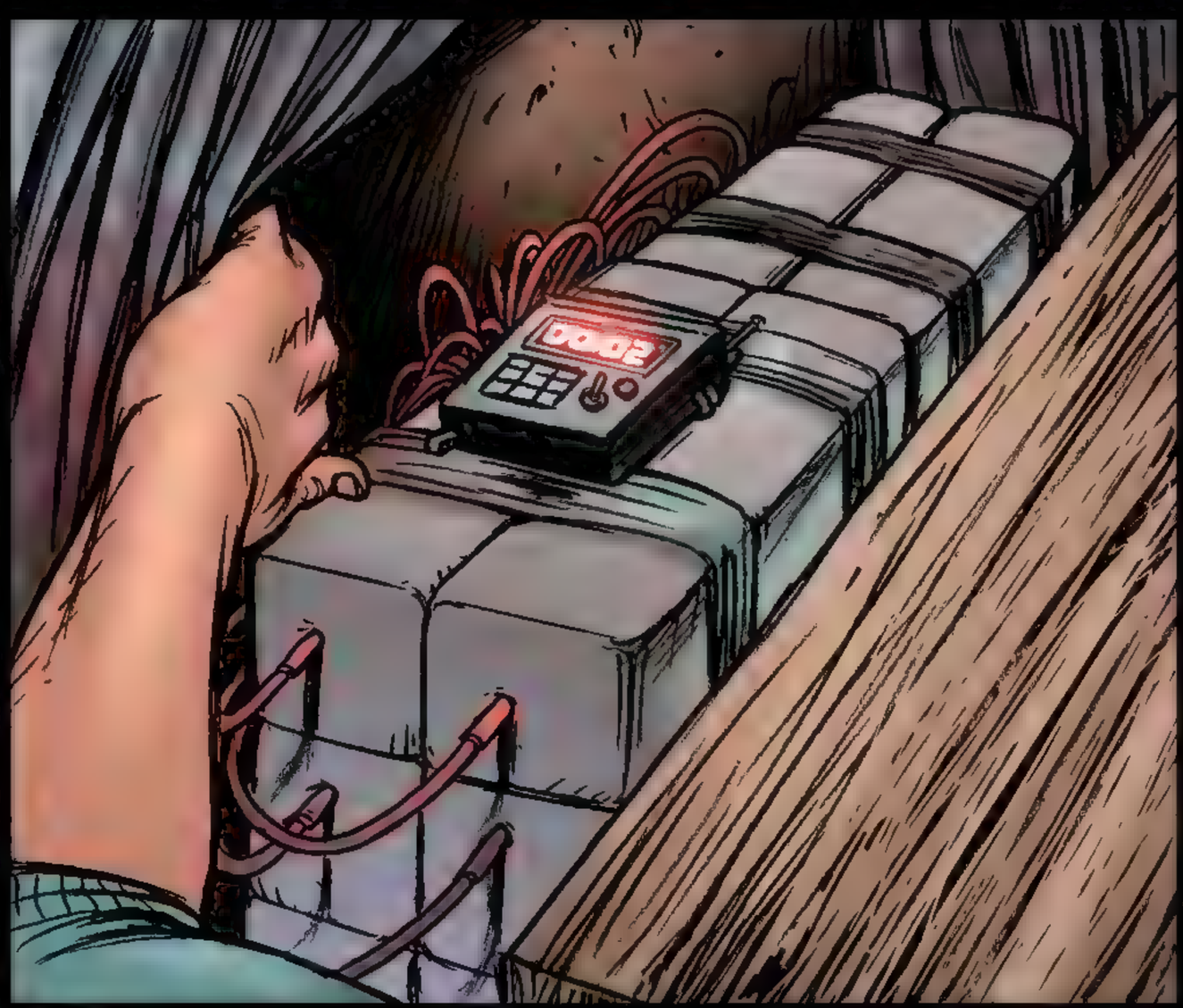
BUT DID I HELP?

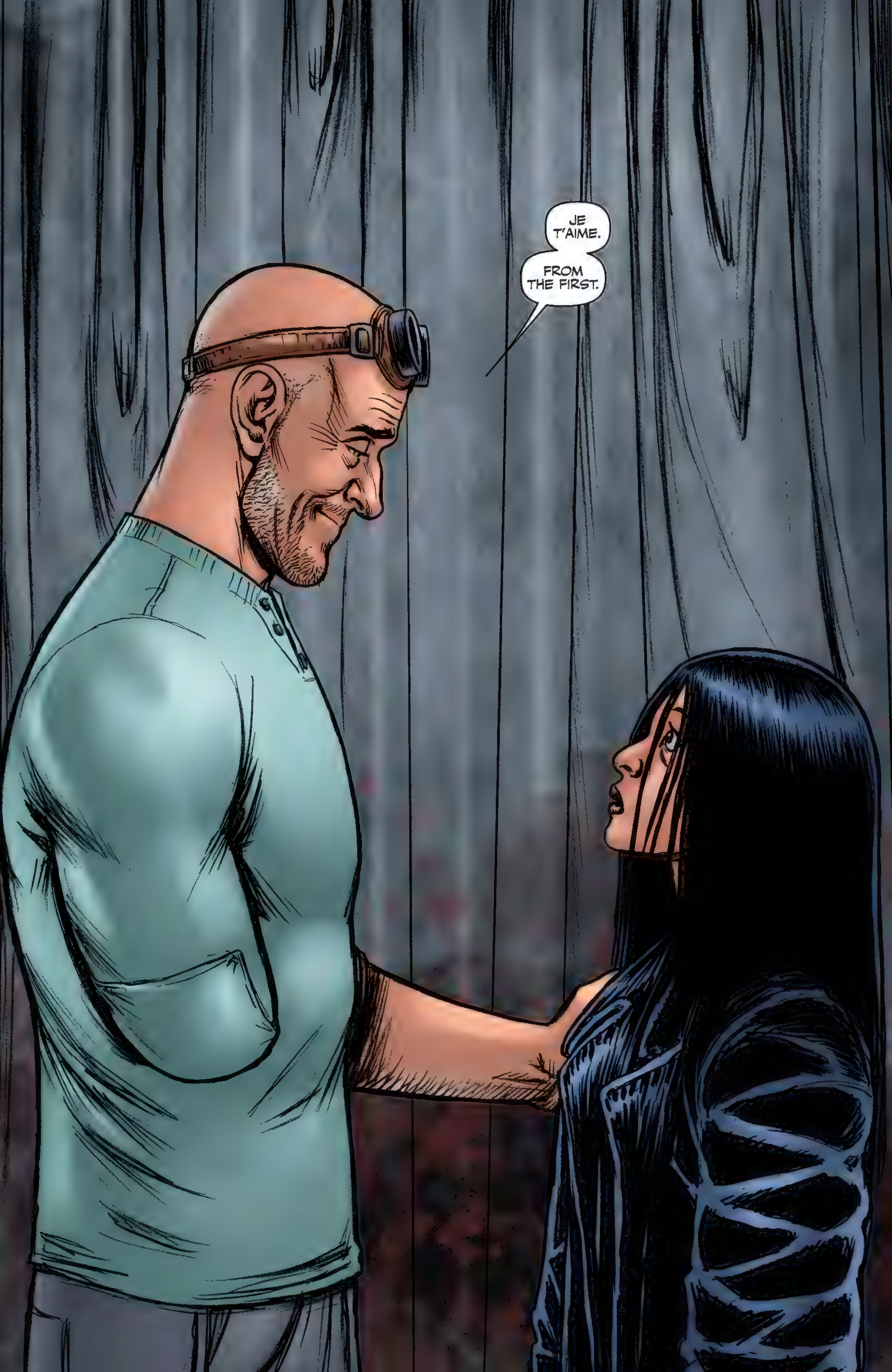
SHIT.
MIND YER HEAD, MY SON.



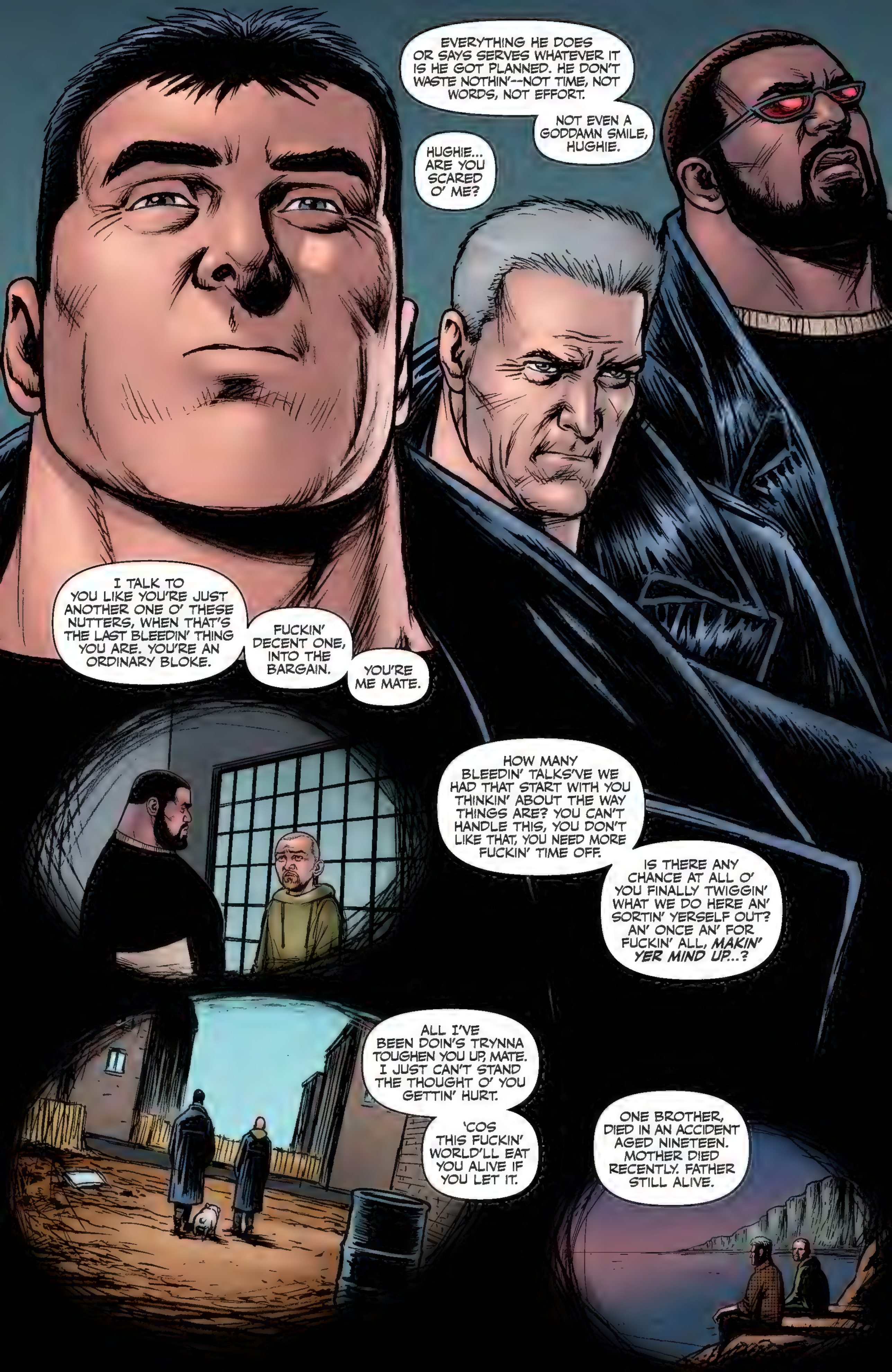
DID YOU HEAR THAT?

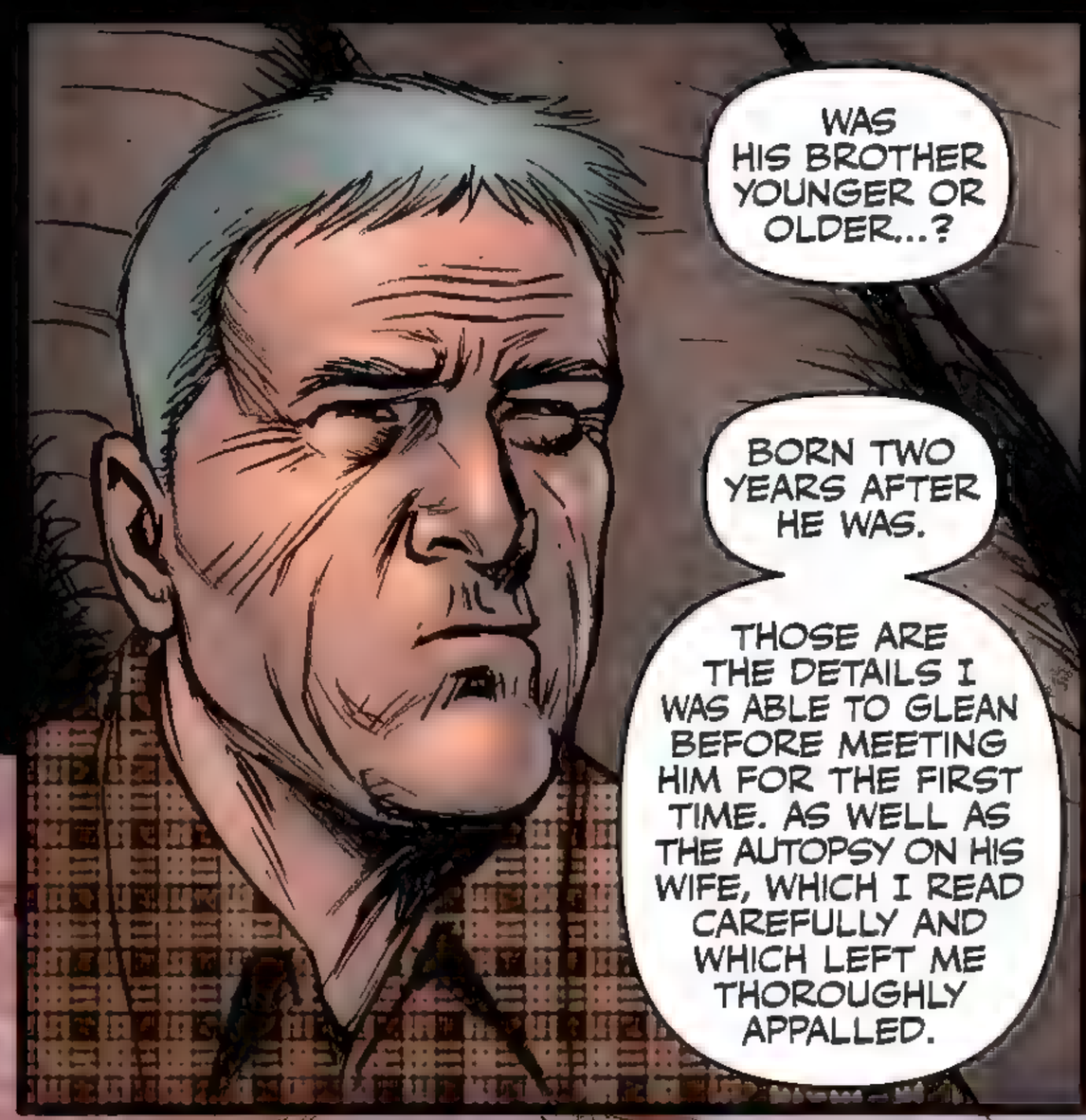


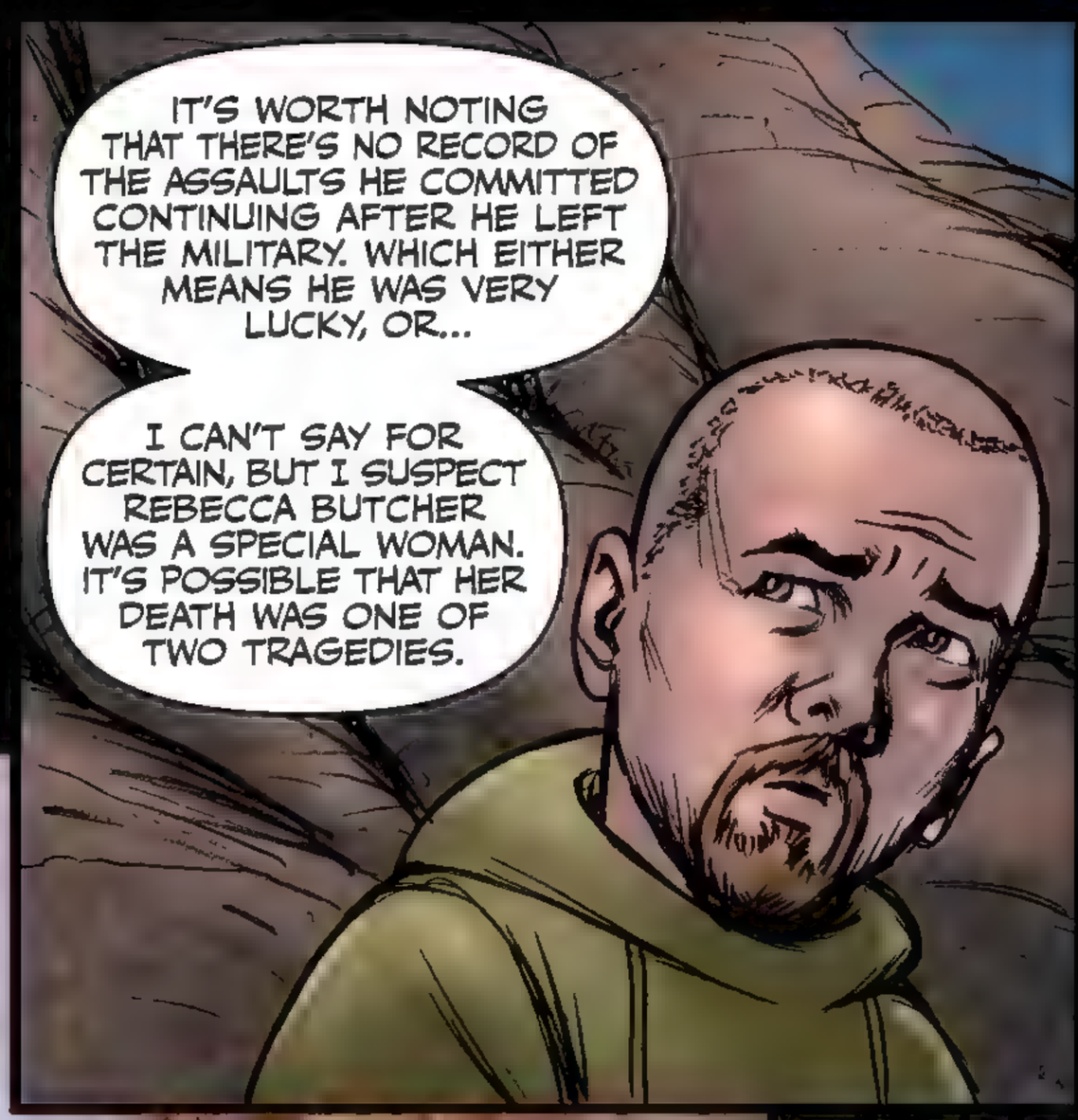



JE T'AIME.
FROM THE FIRST.

WHY DID YOU BRING ME INTO THIS
IF ALL YOU WERE GONNA DO ALL ALONG WAS
...'CAUSE YOU'RE GOOD AT IT.
YOU LIKE IT.
YOU'VE GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE, SO YOU WANT IT.
ALL THAT, AN' I ALWAYS WANTED A LITTLE BROTHER.


EVERYTHING HE DOES OR SAYS SERVES WHATEVER IT IS HE GOT PLANNED. HE DON'T WASTE NOTHIN'--NOT TIME, NOT WORDS, NOT EFFORT.
NOT EVEN A GODDAMN SMILE, HUGHIE.
HUGHIE... ARE YOU SCARED O' ME?
I TALK TO YOU LIKE YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER ONE O' THESE NUTTERS, WHEN THAT'S THE LAST BLEEDIN' THING YOU ARE. YOU'RE AN ORDINARY BLOKE.
FUCKIN' DECENT ONE, INTO THE BARGAIN.
YOU'RE ME MATE.
HOW MANY BLEEDIN' TALKS'VE WE HAD THAT START WITH YOU THINKIN' ABOUT THE WAY THINGS ARE? YOU CAN'T HANDLE THIS, YOU DON'T LIKE THAT, YOU NEED MORE FUCKIN' TIME OFF.
IS THERE ANY CHANCE AT ALL O' YOU FINALLY TWIGGIN' WHAT WE DO HERE AN' SORTIN' YERSELF OUT? AN' ONCE AN' FOR FUCKIN' ALL, MAKIN' YER MIND UP...?
ALL I'VE BEEN DOIN'S TRYNNA TOUGHEN YOU UP, MATE. I JUST CAN'T STAND THE THOUGHT O' YOU GETTIN' HURT.
'COS THIS FUCKIN' WORLD'LL EAT YOU ALIVE IF YOU LET IT.
ONE BROTHER, DIED IN AN ACCIDENT AGED NINETEEN. MOTHER DIED RECENTLY. FATHER STILL ALIVE.





next: THE NAME OF THE GAME

Garth Ennis Russ Braun Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

SEVENTY

DYNAMITE®

SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

SEVENTY

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys.**

Story by:
GARTH ENNIS

Colors by:
TONY AVIÑA

Art by:
RUSS BRAUN

Cover by:
DARICK ROBERTSON

Letters by:
SIMON BOWLAND

The Boys Created By:
ENNIS & ROBERTSON

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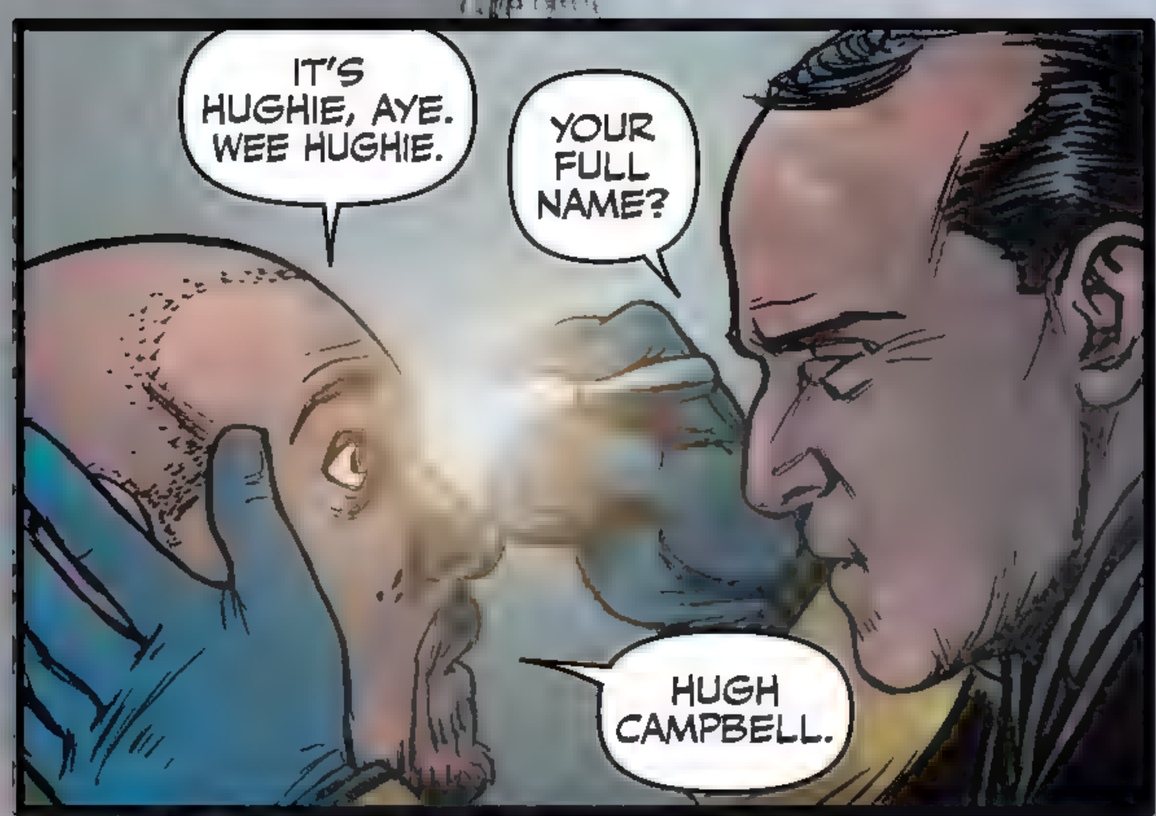
THE BLOODY DOORS OFF

part five

I MEAN THEY DO, DON'T THEY? THEY REALLY DO...
SURE.
YOU'RE NO' JUST SAYIN' THAT, I MEAN YOU DO KEN WHAT I'M ON ABOUT, AYE?
YOU BET.
LISTEN, CAN YOU SAY YOUR NAME FOR ME? YOUR NAME?
F.D.N.Y
EMS


IT'S HUGHIE, AYE. WEE HUGHIE.
YOUR FULL NAME?
HUGH CAMPBELL.

OKAY, HOW ABOUT THE DATE? CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT--
WHOA.

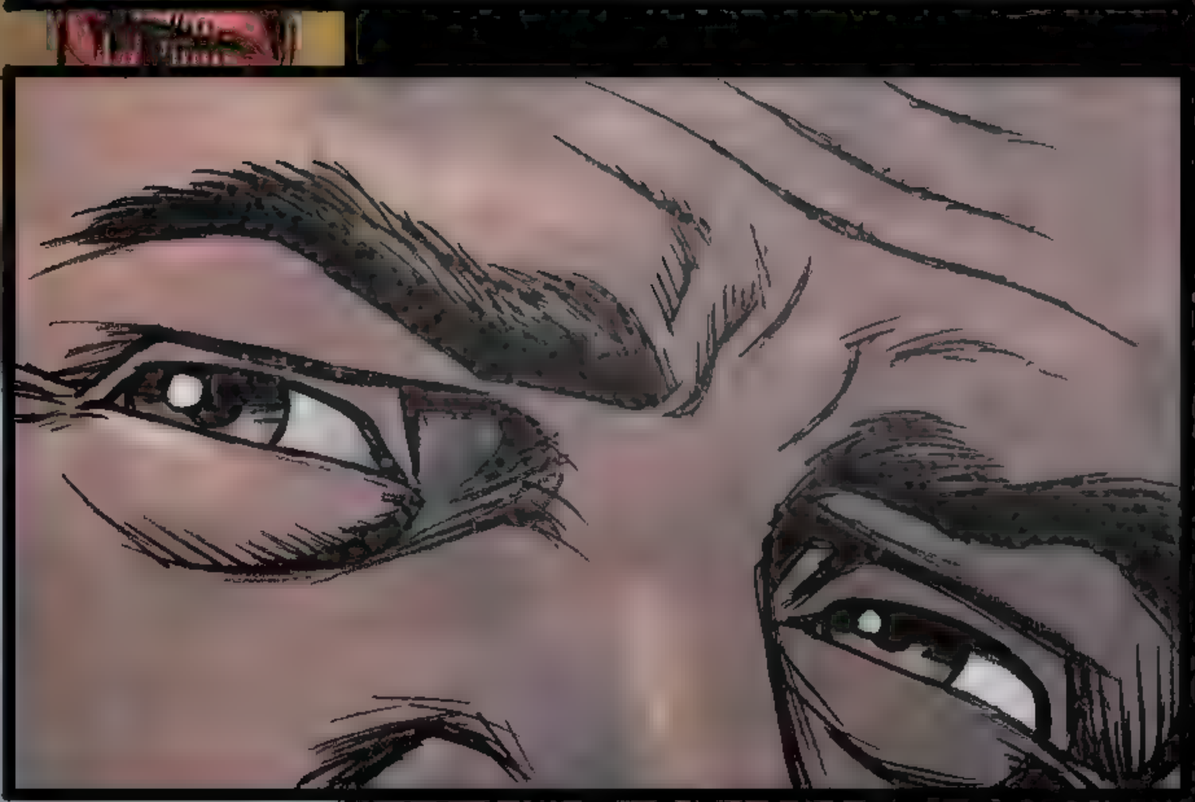
IS THIS...?
ONE FOR THE P.D..
POLICE

LISTEN, THE GUY'S STILL IN SHOCK--
I DON'T CARE. GIVE IT BACK TO HIM.
SERIOUSLY, HE'S GOT A CONCUSSION...
GIVE IT BACK.

THERE YOU GO, SIR. THESE GUYS ARE ALL DONE.
AYE?
ANYTHING YOU NEED, ANYTHING WE CAN DO, DON'T HESITATE. OKAY?

ALL RIGHT FOR YOU, PAL.
HE'S GONNA TEAR MY ARMS AN' LEGS OFF AN' PUT THEM BACK IN THE WRONG SOCKETS.
ALL. RIGHT. FOR. YOU.
NYPD

AW, SORT YERSELF OUT, YOU DOSS CUNT!



HULLO?

HULLO...?

MAH BOOYYYY

HULLO THERE?
MAH BOOYYYYYY

UM...I...
I'M A FRIEND O' YER SON'S, MRS...
MRS. MILK?

IS THERE ANYONE ACTUALLY DOWN HERE...?

WHUH--!

?

MAH BOOYYYYYY

MAH BOOYYYYY
NUH
YUH

AW, NOOOO...!
MAH BOOYYYYYY
OH JESUS--
NEVER TALK ABOUT THIS--
NEVER TELL ANYONE--
EVER--

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TAKING THOSE?
YESTERDAY WAS BRUTAL.

MM.
I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT BE A GOOD TIME TO REVIEW AND REFLECT, IF ONLY TO PREVENT TODAY FROM BEING AS DIFFICULT.
SURE.

IT'S NOT GOING TO BE ENOUGH, IS IT?

THEY'VE BEEN HAMMERING AWAY AT US FOR TWO DAYS AND THEY'VE GOTTEN ABSOLUTELY NOWHERE. WE'VE STUCK TO OUR LINE. GIVEN NOTHING AWAY.
AND IT'S NOT GOING TO BE ENOUGH BECAUSE THEY WANT SOMEONE TO *SWING* FOR THIS...

GO ON.
AT THE START YOU SAID WE'D GONE TOO FAR. WE'D PUSHED PEOPLE BEYOND THE NOTION OF THE WORLD WORKING AS THEY SUSPECTED IT DID, OF WHAT EVEN THE MOST CYNICAL AND APATHETIC WOULD BE PREPARED TO LIVE WITH.
AND YOU WERE RIGHT, AND THAT'S WHAT'S GOING TO KILL US.

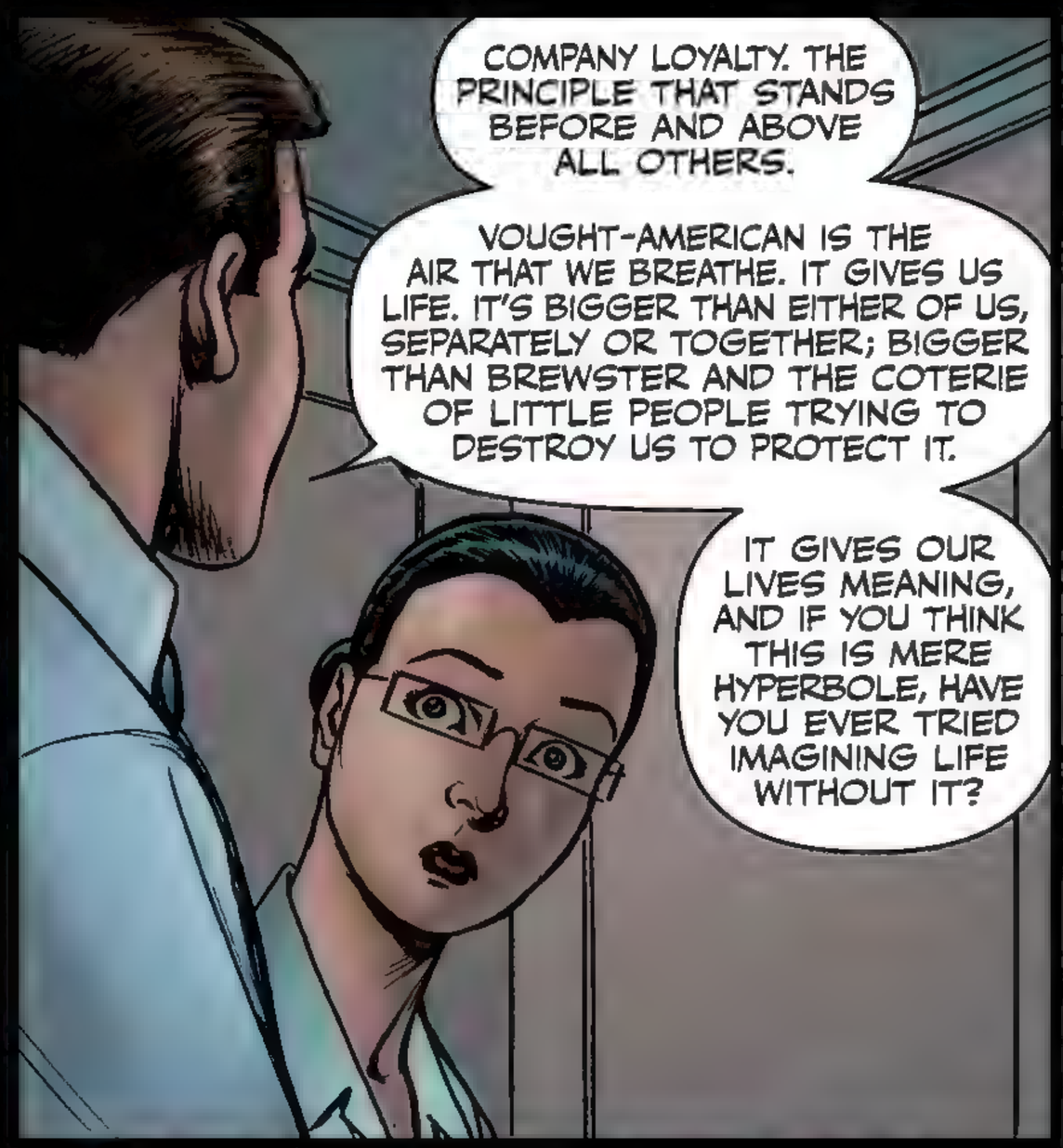
BECAUSE NO MATTER HOW MUCH DAMAGE CONTROL WE DO, OR HOW FAR DOWN IN THE DARK WE KEEP THE DAKOTA BOB PLAN: *WE'VE GONE TOO FAR.*
HUNDREDS DEAD, INCLUDING A PRESIDENT. A BATTLE IN THE SKY, AN EXECUTION ON THE WHITE HOUSE LAWN. THE SUPES TURNING OUT TO BE RABID DEMONS, NOT MESSIAHS IN PRETTY COSTUMES.

IT'S ALL TOO MUCH, IT'S ALL GOING TO COME TUMBLING DOWN ON US, LIKE THE ROCKS THEY THROW AT A PUBLIC STONING...
SO WHAT DO WE DO?

WE--
MAKE A DEAL.

NO.
WAIT, LISTEN TO ME, WITH WHAT WE KNOW WE--
NO.
WE COULD GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT, A MONSTER, A VILLAIN, SOMETHING TO PUBLICLY--
NO.

JESSICA, WE CAN'T BETRAY OUR CORPORATION.


COMPANY LOYALTY. THE PRINCIPLE THAT STANDS BEFORE AND ABOVE ALL OTHERS.
VOUGHT-AMERICAN IS THE AIR THAT WE BREATHE. IT GIVES US LIFE. IT'S BIGGER THAN EITHER OF US, SEPARATELY OR TOGETHER; BIGGER THAN BREWSTER AND THE COTERIE OF LITTLE PEOPLE TRYING TO DESTROY US TO PROTECT IT.
IT GIVES OUR LIVES MEANING, AND IF YOU THINK THIS IS MERE HYPERBOLE, HAVE YOU EVER TRIED IMAGINING LIFE WITHOUT IT?

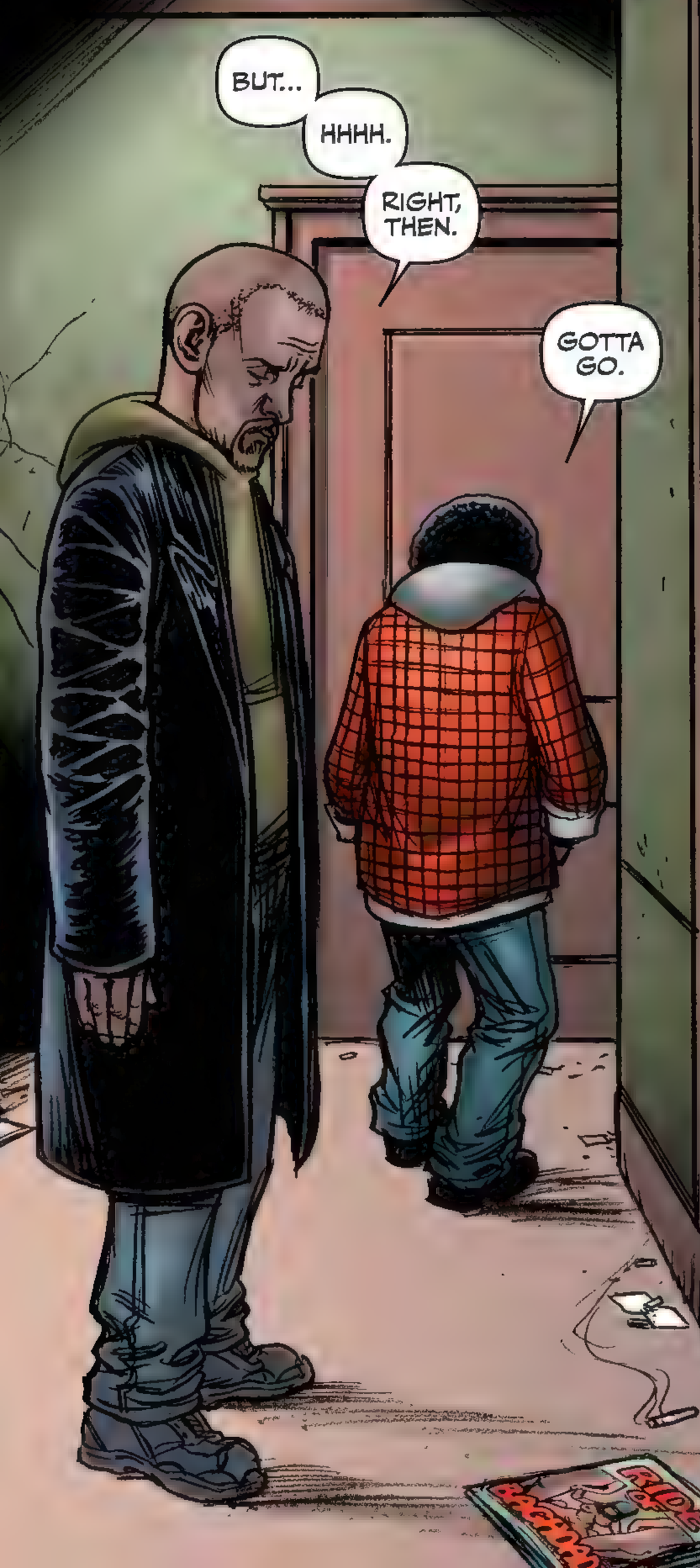
WE'VE GIVEN OUR TESTIMONY. THEY HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO SHAKE US, THEY KNOW NO MORE THAN WHAT WE'VE DECIDED THEY SHOULD. LEGALLY, THEY CANNOT TOUCH US.
TAKE MY HAND. TAKE HEART.

IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY.

MISTER POTAMUS?
FUCK!
RIDE OF
BAGAPAP
WHAT'RE YOU--?
I--SHIT-- I JUST--
OH MY GOD, YOU'RE THE DOOR-WANKER...!
AIN'T MY FAULT, MAN! AIN'T MY FUCKIN' FAULT, THE DUDE PAID ME!
WHO PAID YOU?
THE DUDE, MAN!
BIG BRITISH DUDE, HE CAME TO ME TWO YEARS AGO! HE SAID HE DIDN'T WANT YOU LIVIN' HERE, HE PAID ME TO JERK OFF UNDER YOUR DOOR EVERY NIGHT SO YOU'D WANNA MOVE OUT!
HE SAID THE PLACE IS A FUCKIN' SHITHOLE, HE WANTED YOU LIVIN' SOMEWHERE BETTER...!

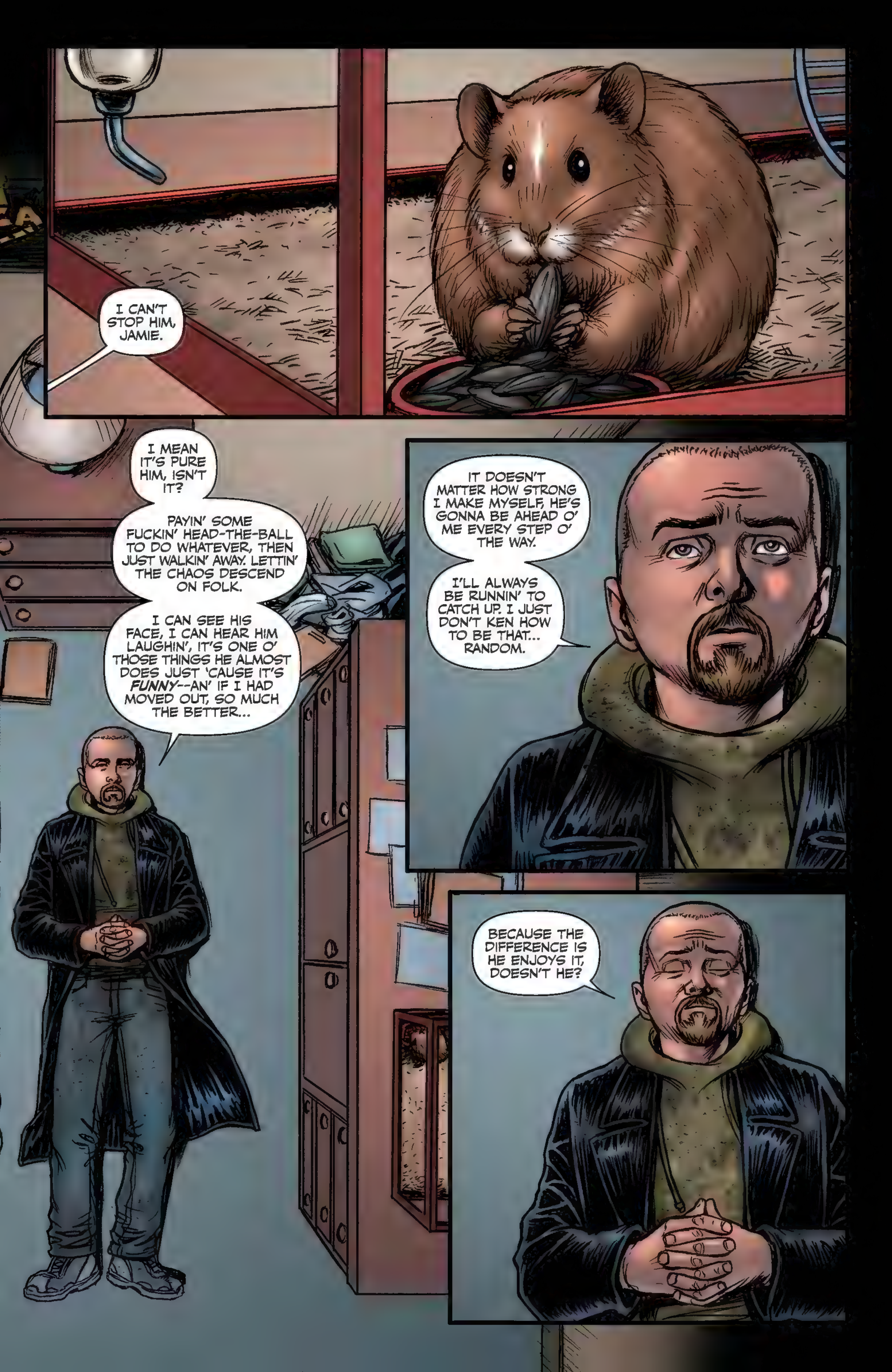
HE...HE...
WAIT A MINUTE, HE SAID YOUR PLACE WAS A SHITHOLE, BUT YOU'RE HAPPY TO WANK OFF UNDER MY DOOR FOR HIM...?
HE PAID ME.

AN'...YOU WERE TRYNNA DRIVE ME OUT, BUT YOU STILL DIDN'T MIND FEEDIN' MY HAMSTER FOR ME WHEN I WAS AWAY?
YOU PAID ME.


BUT...
HHHH.
RIGHT, THEN.
GOTTA GO.

MISTER POTAMUS, WHY IS THERE BLOOD IN IT?

AIN'T THERE S'POSED TO BE?


I CAN'T STOP HIM, JAMIE.
I MEAN IT'S PURE HIM, ISN'T IT?
PAYIN' SOME FUCKIN' HEAD-THE-BALL TO DO WHATEVER, THEN JUST WALKIN' AWAY. LETTIN' THE CHAOS DESCEND ON FOLK.
I CAN SEE HIS FACE, I CAN HEAR HIM LAUGHIN', IT'S ONE O' THOSE THINGS HE ALMOST DOES JUST 'CAUSE IT'S *FUNNY*--AN' IF I HAD MOVED OUT, SO MUCH THE BETTER...
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW STRONG I MAKE MYSELF, HE'S GONNA BE AHEAD O' ME EVERY STEP O' THE WAY.
I'LL ALWAYS BE RUNNIN' TO CATCH UP. I JUST DON'T KEN HOW TO BE THAT... RANDOM.
BECAUSE THE DIFFERENCE IS HE ENJOYS IT, DOESN'T HE?

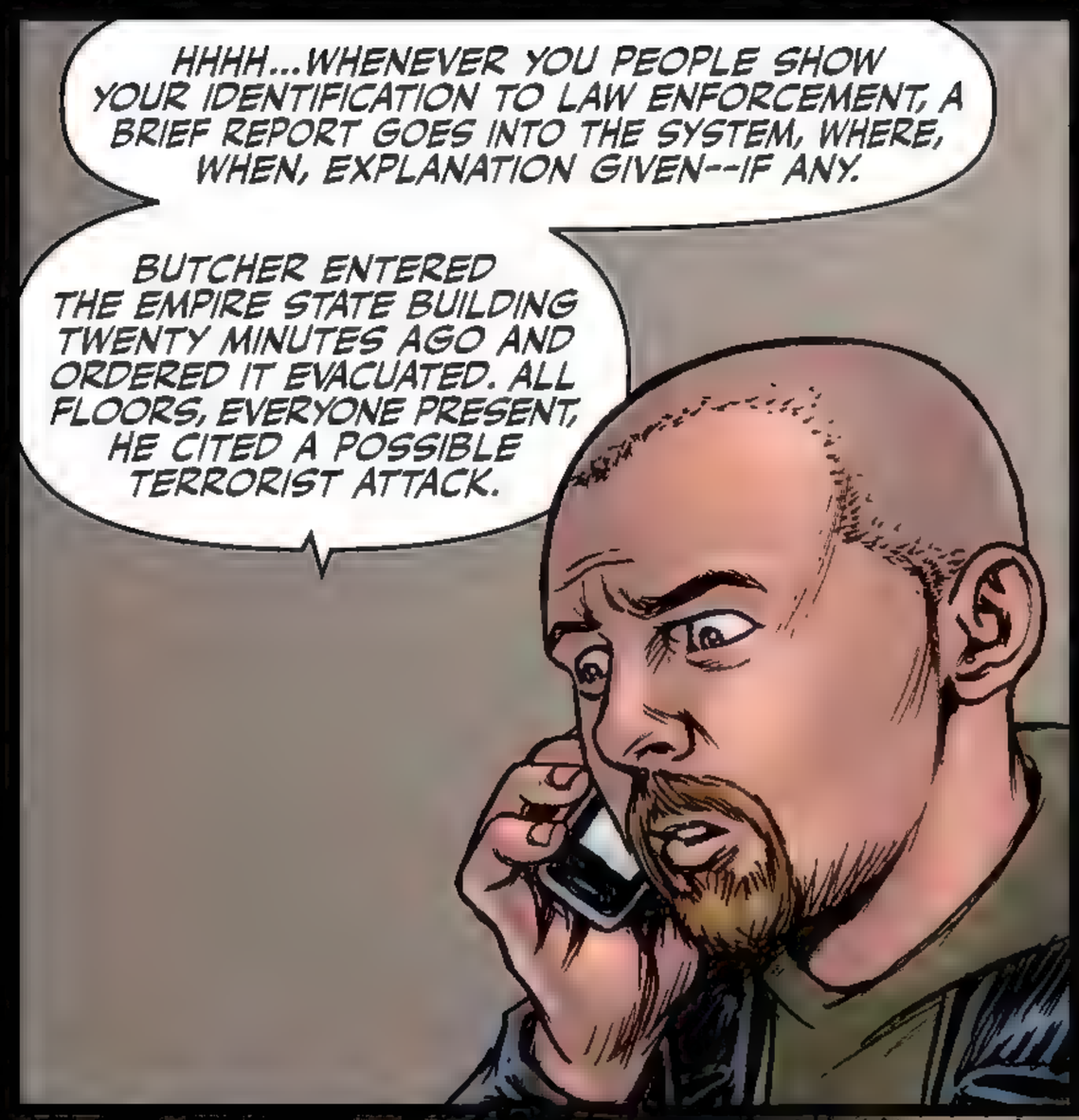
DOESN'T HE, JAMIE?
EH?

I'LL HAVE TO PHONE MONKEY. TURN IT OVER TO HIM. THERE'S NO WAY I CAN DO THIS WITHOUT M.M. AN' FRENCHIE AN' HER.
AN' IF THEY DO END UP KILLIN' ME, FUCK IT. MAYBE I CAN JUST ABOUT BE THAT BRAVE.

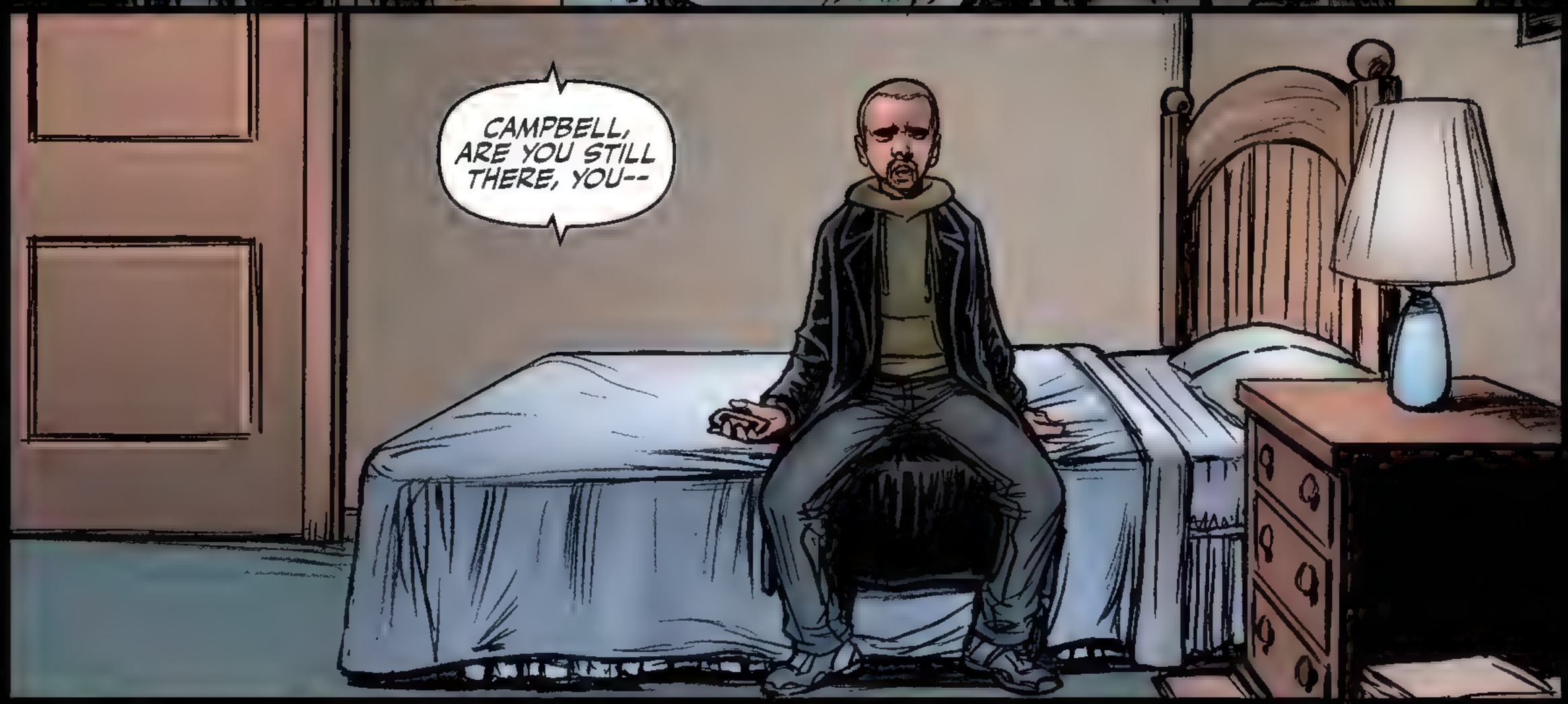
CAMPBELL?
HULLO THERE, MONKEY. LISTEN, I'VE GOT GOOD NEWS AN' BAD NEWS: THE GOOD NEWS IS YOU'VE GOT A CHANCE TO SAVE THE--
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHAT'S GOING ON?

LISTEN, WHAT IN GOD'S NAME HAPPENED AT THE FLATIRON LAST NIGHT? AND WHAT'S BUTCHER DOING AT THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING?

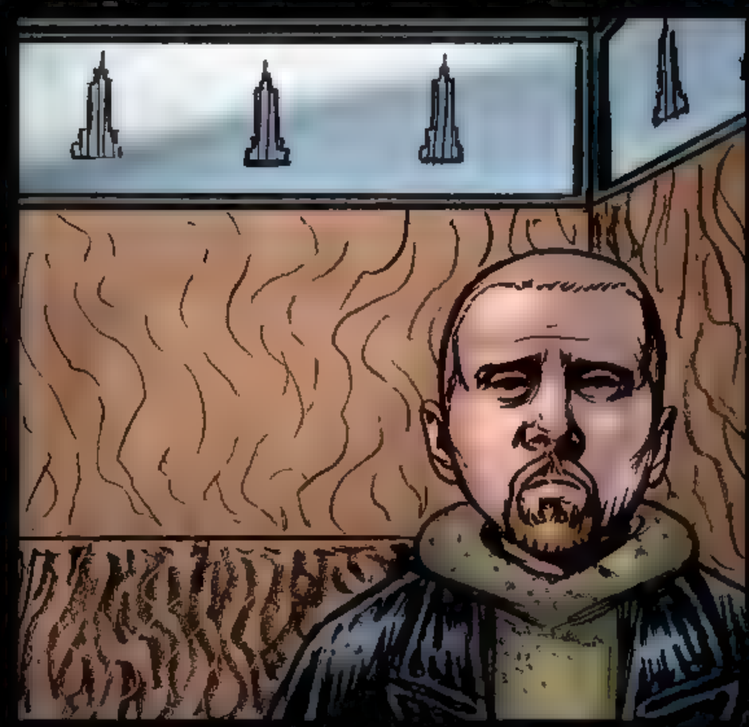
SAY THAT AGAIN...?
THE FLATIRON BUILDING, YOUR OFFICE, DON'T YOU EVEN KNOW--
NO' THAT. THE OTHER THING. WHAT WAS THAT YOU SAID?

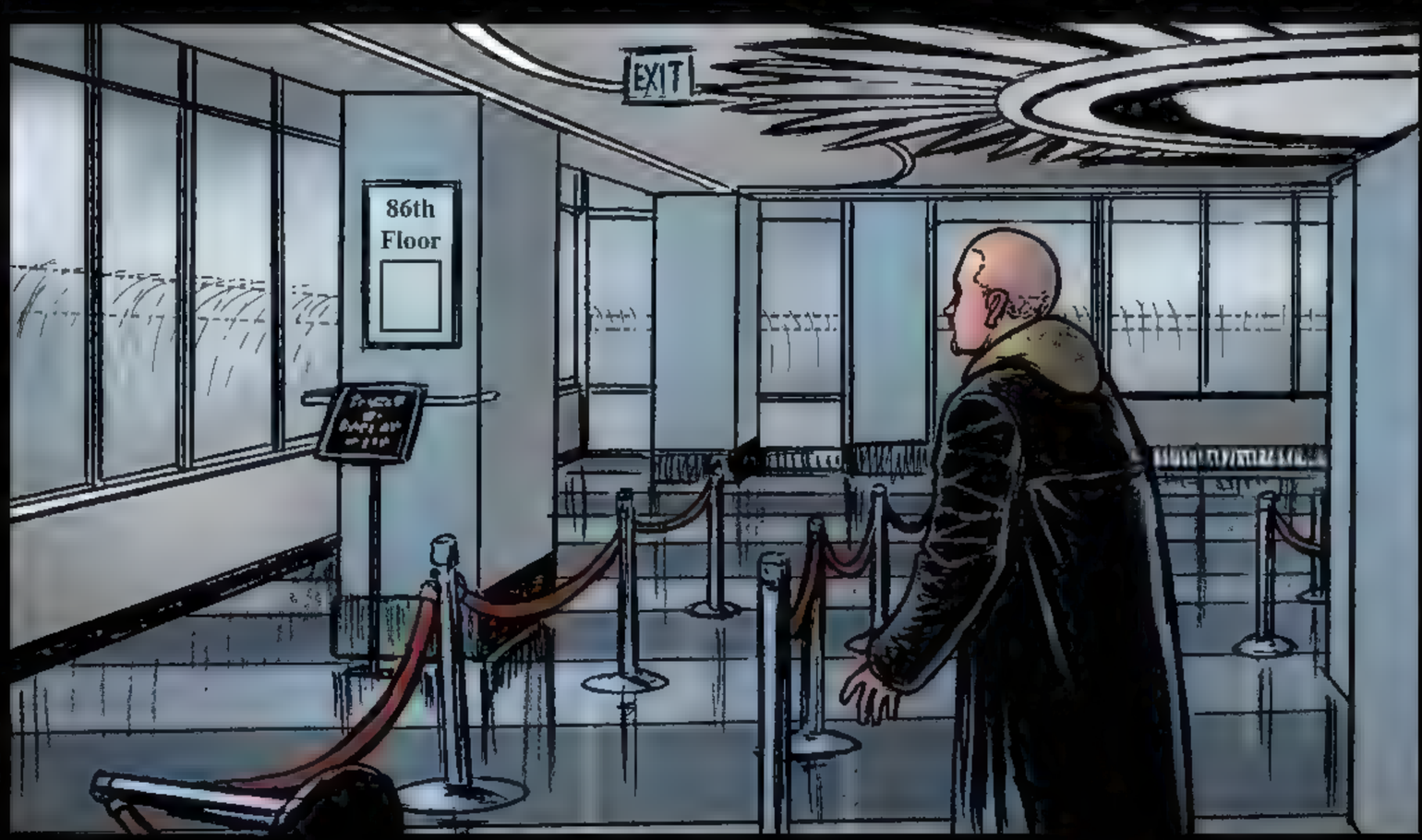


SOMETIMES LIFE'S AS BIG AN' MAD AN' FUCKIN' WIDESCREEN AS IT DESERVES TO BE.



...SOME FEDERAL THING, WE HOPPED TO IT. BUT IF THIS IS CONNECTED TO WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT, I'D LIKE--
WE APPRECIATE ALL YOUR HELP, CAPTAIN. OUR PEOPLE CAN TAKE IT FROM HERE.
OKAY, BECAUSE THE GUY--THE ORDERS GIVEN WERE TO EVACUATE AS A PRECAUTION. I DIDN'T GET ANY CRITICAL SENSE OF URGENCY.
PLEASE JUST CARRY ON WORKING WITH US AS YOU'VE BEEN DOING. KEEP EVERYONE OUT OF THE BUILDING 'TIL YOU HEAR FROM ME.




EXIT
86th Floor

ALL RIGHT?
AYE.
I KEN HOW MUCH YOU LOVE THE PLACE, SO I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT ONE LAST LOOK BEFORE BLOWIN' IT ALL TO FUCK.

IT'S LIKE SOME STUPID BLOODY MOVIE. SMASH DOWN ALL THE BEAUTIFUL BUILDIN'S 'CAUSE YOU LIKE THE WAY THEY LOOK WHEN THEY FALL.
I MEAN HAS THIS CITY NO' SUFFERED ENOUGH...?
NAH, AIN'T NONE O' THE SPECIAL SURPRISE PACKAGES SET UP LOCALLY, HUGHIE. I'M JUST UP HERE TO GET LINE O' SIGHT FOR THE SIGNAL.
THAT AN' THE VIEW, O' COURSE.
AW, GREAT, SO ALL THE AVERAGE NEW YORKER'S GOTTA WORRY ABOUT'S HIS FUCKIN' HEAD EXPLODIN'. IF HE'S ONE O' THE UNLUCKY WHO-KNOWS-WHAT PERCENT.
AN' I'M MEANT TO STOP YOU, IS THAT IT? WOULD YOU MIND TELLIN' ME HOW IN THE NAME O' GOD YOU CAME UP WI' THAT?
DUNNO EXACTLY.
I'D BEEN THINKIN' ABOUT DOIN' THIS FOR AGES. HAD HALF AN IDEA SOMEONE OUGHTA HAVE A CHANCE AT STICKIN' A SPANNER IN THE WORKS.
I MEAN IT AIN'T THE SORTA THING YOU DO LIGHTLY, WIPIN' OUT A GOOD CHUNK O' THE HUMAN RACE...
THAT'S INSANE.
YEAH, I KNOW.
I'VE ALREADY GOT THAT FEELIN' I GET, SOMETIMES. WHENEVER I REALLY FUCKIN' GO FOR IT.

WHICH IS...?
LIKE I'M SOMEWHERE ELSE WATCHIN' IT HAPPEN.

OH, WELL THAT'S PURE DEAD BRILLIANT, THAT IS. I'LL HAVE TO TELL THE SECURITY FELLA AT THE FLATIRON THAT, IF THEY EVER MANAGE TO DIG HIM OUT. AN' THE BOY WAS DRIVIN' PAST GOT BLINDED, AN' THE LASSIE LOST BOTH LEGS.
THERE YOU GO. EVEN AT FIVE A.M. THERE'S COLLATERAL.

YEAH, I KNOW. BUT IT HAD TO BE DONE.
WHY. 'CAUSE SOMEBODY HAD SOME BIG BLOODY PLAN?
BUT I GET THE IDEA. I REALLY DO.

THE CITY'S LEGO AN' PEOPLE ARE TOYS: YOU SOUND LIKE A FUCKIN' *SUPERVILLAIN*...

AH, NOW YOU'RE FIGHTIN' DIRTY, HUGHIE.
GOOD FOR YOU.

I--
YOU'RE STILL SCARED O' ME, AIN'T YOU?

EH--?
'COURSE YOU ARE.
YOU NEVER COULD LOOK ME IN THE EYE FOR ALL THAT LONG. STILL CAN'T.

CAN YOU EVEN SAY ME NAME?

YEAH, THERE YOU ARE.

HMH.

RRAAAAAAAHHH!!
HUGHIE, DON'T BE A CUNT--!
RRAAHH!!!
RRRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH

next: THE SCORES ON THE DOORS

DYNAMITE
SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS
Garth Ennis Russ Braun Darick Robertson
The BOYS
SEVENTY-ONE
DA RI CK 2012

Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

SEVENTY-ONE

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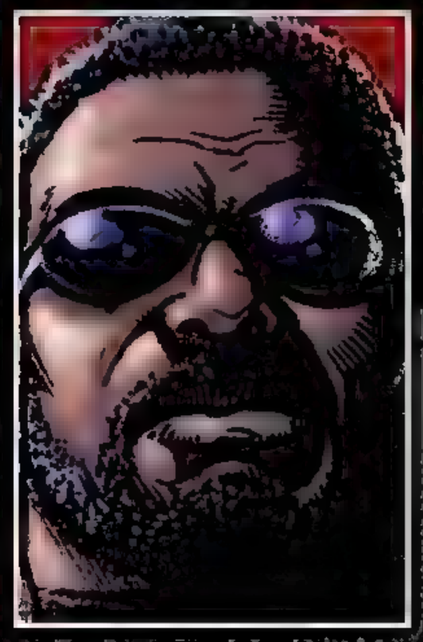

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THE BLOODY DOORS OFF

conclusion

AW FUCK, HELP ME, GET ME DOWN...!
SNAP THE BAR, YOU TIT.

WH-WH-WH--?
THAT'S WHAT'S HOLDIN' YOU UP THERE. SNAP IT.
BUT IT REALLY HURTS...!
IT'S GONNA HURT A FUCKSIGHT MORE IF YOU DON'T.

AAAAH! AAH-AAH-AAH-AAH- AAAAH!

WHUHHH!!
THERE YOU GO.

OH GOD-- OH FUCK--!
I DON'T LIKE THE LOOK O' THAT, I THINK YOU MIGHT'VE NICKED THE FEMORAL. TIE YER BELT ROUND IT QUICK AS YOU CAN, YEAH?

AAAAAAAAAHH, MY HAND...!
THAT AIN'T THE BAD ONE, MATE, THAT AIN'T GONNA KILL YOU. COME ON, TIE IT UP TIGHT.

THERE, HOW'S THAT?
FUCK.
AW FUCK.
FUCK, I CAN HARDLY MOVE.

SHITE...
OH, TOO BAD, MY SON. LOOKS LIKE WE'RE BOTH STUCK.

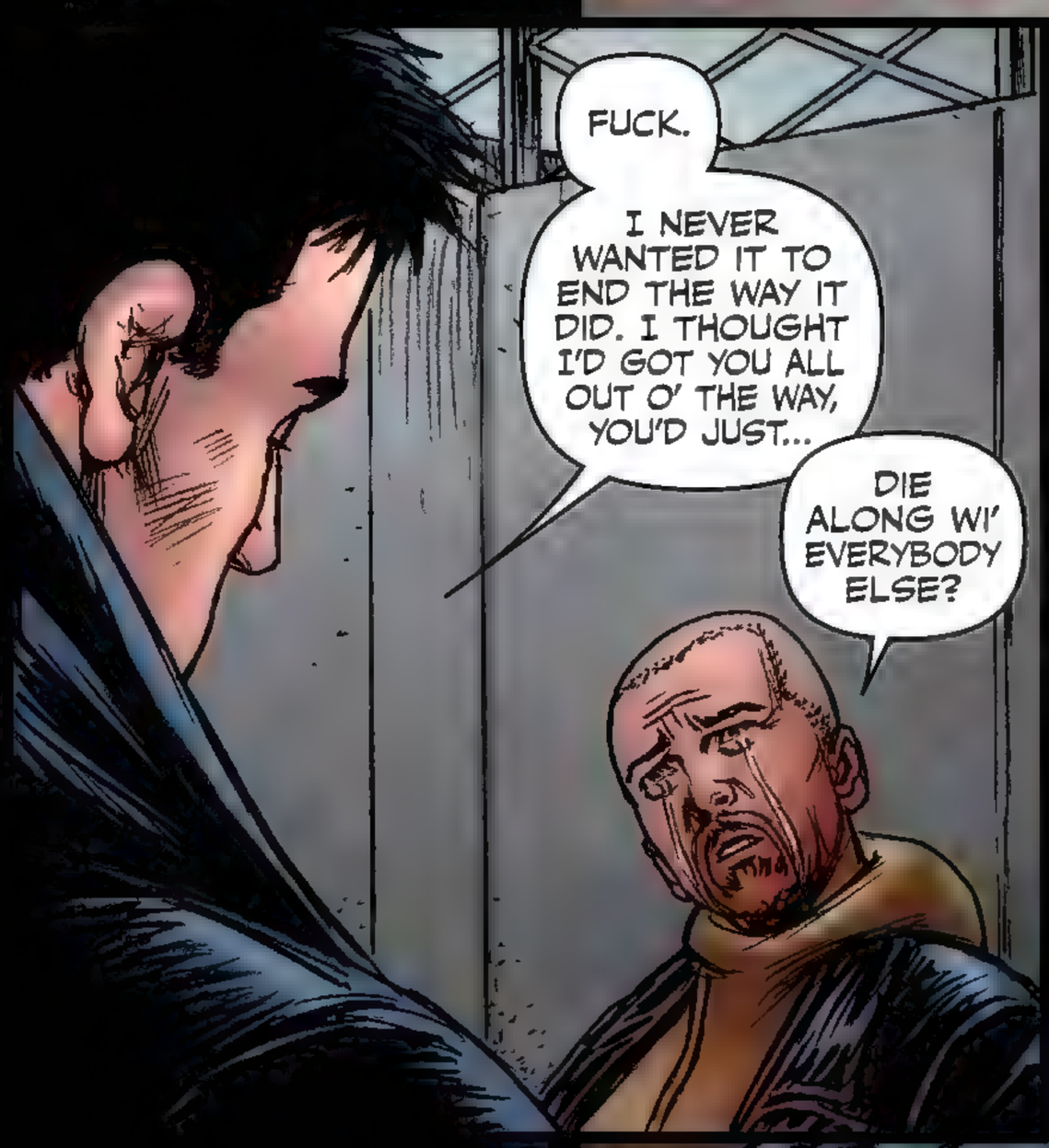
STILL, LUCKY FOR YOU THAT LANDED THE WRONG WAY UP, EH?

AW, NOW DON'T BLOODY START THAT...!

YOU KNOW I CAN'T STAND THAT, IF THERE'S--
HOW COULD YOU?
HOW COULD YOU DO IT?

I TOLD YOU. THERE'S NO POINT GOIN' OVER AN' OVER IT AGAIN, JUST BE GRATEFUL I BOLLOCKSED IT UP...
I'M NO' TALKIN' ABOUT THAT.

M.M.. FRENCHIE AN' HER.
HOW COULD YOU...?

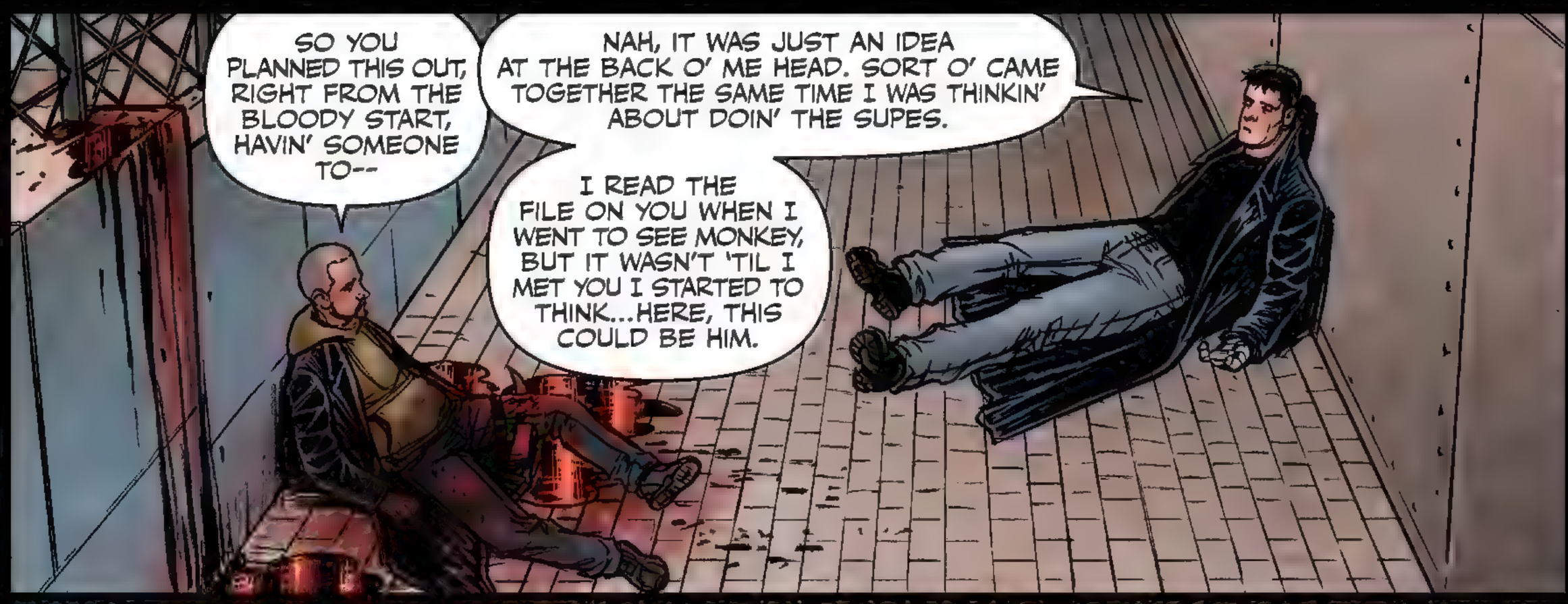

FUCK.
I NEVER WANTED IT TO END THE WAY IT DID. I THOUGHT I'D GOT YOU ALL OUT O' THE WAY, YOU'D JUST...
DIE ALONG WI' EVERYBODY ELSE?

KNOWIN' NOTHIN'.

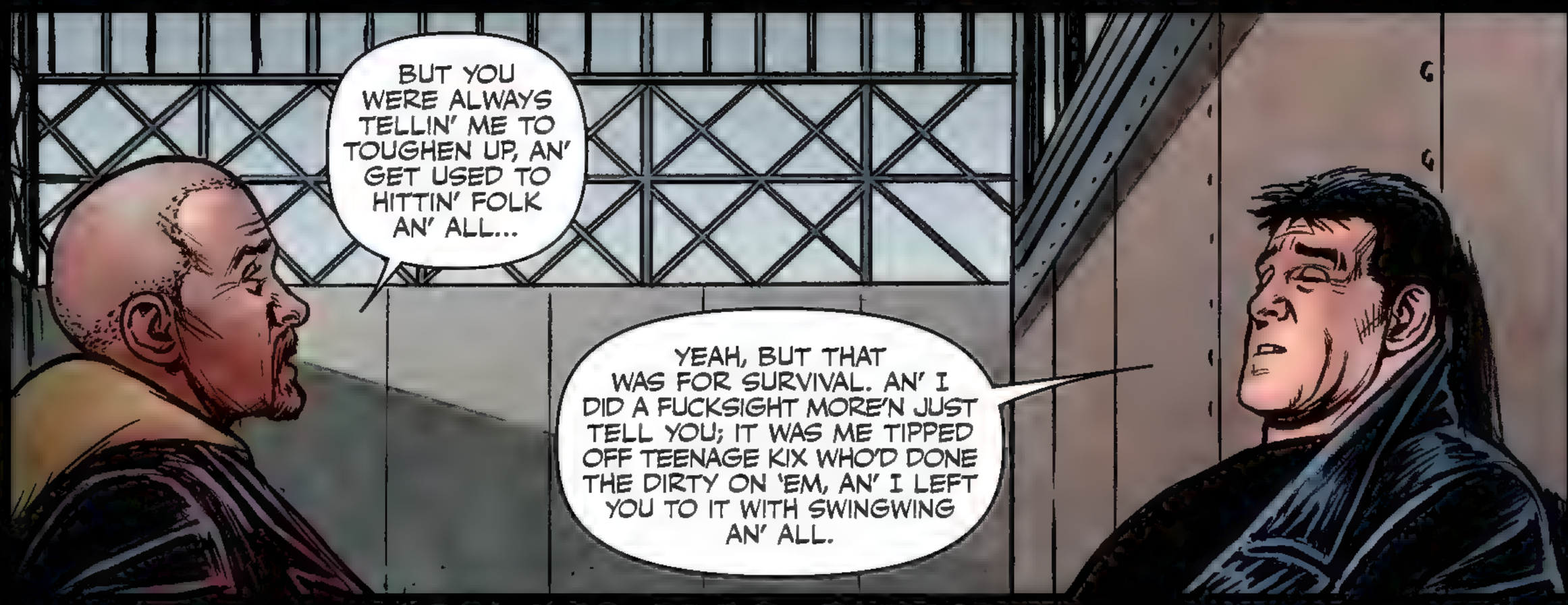
YEAH, I KNOW.

I KILLED ME FIRST MAN AT SEVENTEEN, HUGHIE. DONE A LOT MORE SINCE THEN. AN' EVERY TIME I GET THAT FEELIN' I TOLD YOU ABOUT, LIKE I'M WATCHIN' FROM SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY.

IT AIN'T LIKE I DON'T KNOW IT'S WRONG, BUT... IT FEELS LIKE A DREAM, OR SOMETHIN'. AN' IT'S WHAT LETS ME GET THE JOB DONE WITHOUT WORRYIN' ABOUT IT LATER.


SO YOU PLANNED THIS OUT, RIGHT FROM THE BLOODY START, HAVIN' SOMEONE TO--
NAH, IT WAS JUST AN IDEA AT THE BACK O' ME HEAD. SORT O' CAME TOGETHER THE SAME TIME I WAS THINKIN' ABOUT DOIN' THE SUPES.
I READ THE FILE ON YOU WHEN I WENT TO SEE MONKEY, BUT IT WASN'T 'TIL I MET YOU I STARTED TO THINK...HERE, THIS COULD BE HIM.

YOU AN' YER BLEEDIN' MORAL STREAK.


BUT YOU WERE ALWAYS TELLIN' ME TO TOUGHEN UP, AN' GET USED TO HITTIN' FOLK AN' ALL...
YEAH, BUT THAT WAS FOR SURVIVAL. AN' I DID A FUCKSIGHT MORE'N JUST TELL YOU; IT WAS ME TIPPED OFF TEENAGE KIX WHO'D DONE THE DIRTY ON 'EM, AN' I LEFT YOU TO IT WITH SWINGWING AN' ALL.

WHAT...?
AN' NONE OF IT MADE A BLIND BIT O' DIFFERENCE. YOU STAYED YERSELF NO MATTER WHAT I DONE.
FUCK, I DOUBT YOU EVEN LIKED KILLIN' A-TRAIN ALL THAT MUCH, EVEN WITH WHAT YOU WERE AFTER THE TOSSER FOR...

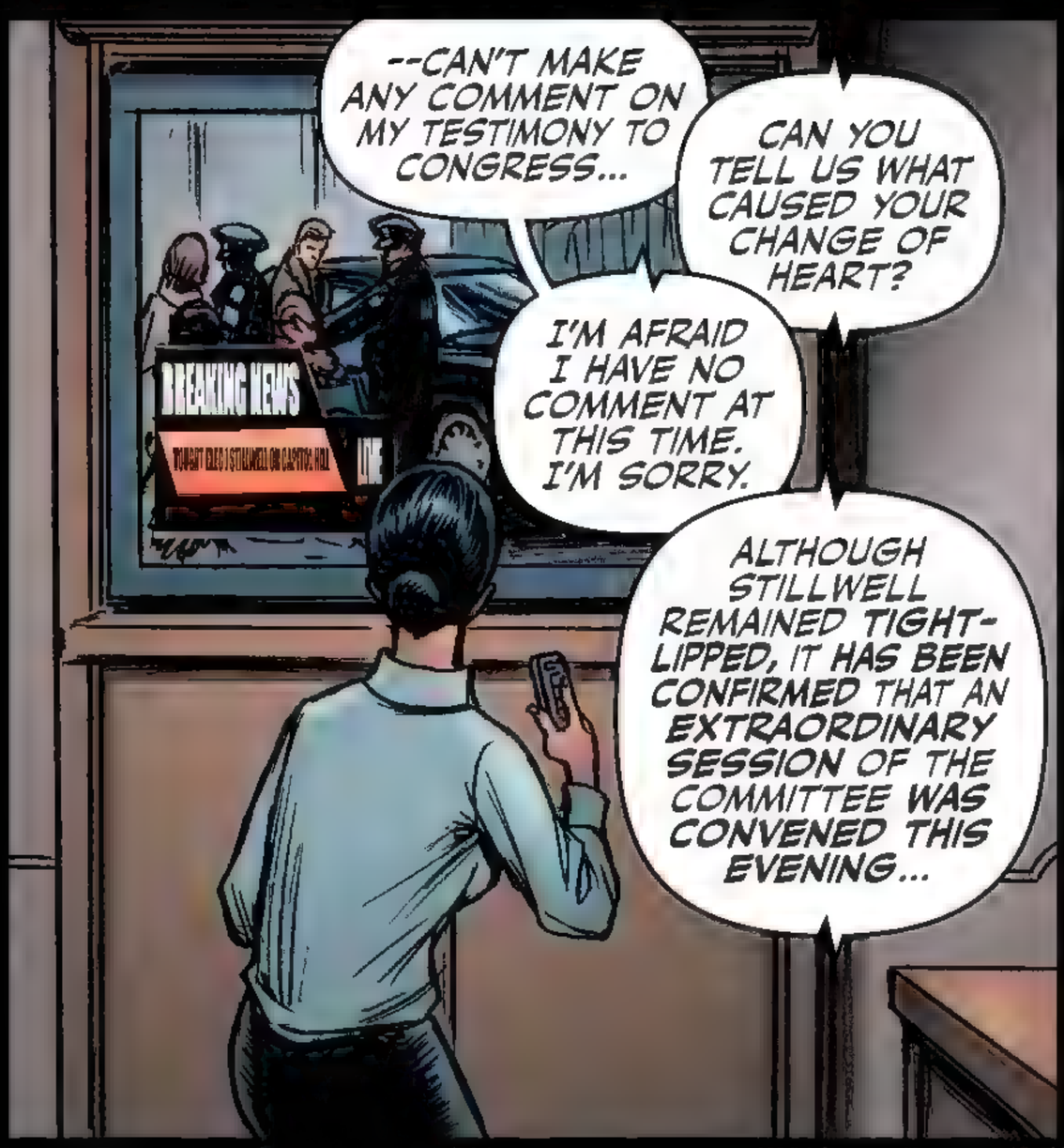
I FUCKIN' HATED DOIN' THAT--!
THERE YOU ARE.
I'D MORE OR LESS GIVEN UP ON YOU STOPPIN' ME AT ALL, D'YOU KNOW THAT? I WAS THINKIN' THE OTHER DAY, SHIT, MAYBE I SHOULD'VE GONE FOR SOMEONE MORE LIKE MESELF-- BUT THEN SOMEONE LIKE ME WOULDN'T'VE WANTED TO STOP ME, WOULD THEY?
IN THE END YOU'RE JUST LIKE LENNY WAS. A GOOD LITTLE BLOKE WHO CAN'T HELP BEIN' REASONABLE.

I WAS GONNA TRY AN' FIGHT YOU, LIKE. I WENT TO M.M.'S MUM, I DRANK MOTHER'S MILK'S MOTHER'S MILK...
JESUS--!
BUT I EVEN MADE A PIG'S EAR O' THAT, DIDN'T I?
I DUNNO.
MAYBE IF I HADN'T BEEN WHO I AM...WELL, YOU MIGHT NOT'VE WANTED TO SAVE MY LIFE A MINUTE AGO.
AN' WE WOULDN'T BE WHERE WE ARE NOW. VERY TRUE.
FUCK...!
I JUST--I'M SITTIN' HERE TALKIN' AWAY TO YOU LIKE NOTHIN'S HAPPENED, AN'--I JUST CAN'T GET IT INTO MY HEAD THAT THIS IS WHO YOU'VE TURNED OUT TO BE...
'FRAID SO, MY SON.
THEN AGAIN, I WAS THE ONE PUT THE BOYS BACK TOGETHER AFTER MALLORY LOST HIS BOTTLE. I MADE 'EM WHAT THEY WERE MEANT TO BE.
I GOT VOGELBAUM WORKIN' ON FUCKIN' SUPE-SEEKIN' MISSILES; THE HOMELANDER AN' HIS MATES WOULD'VE CAUSED A LOT MORE BOTHER IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR ME.
YOU NEED BLOKES LIKE ME, HUGHIE.
IT'S WHAT WE GET UP TO IN OUR SPARE TIME YOU'VE GOTTA WORRY ABOUT.
JESUS, WHERE THE FUCK'RE THE COPS?
I SAID TERRORISTS. THAT'S THE MAGIC WORD.
I RECKON WE'LL BE WAITIN' A BIT YET.

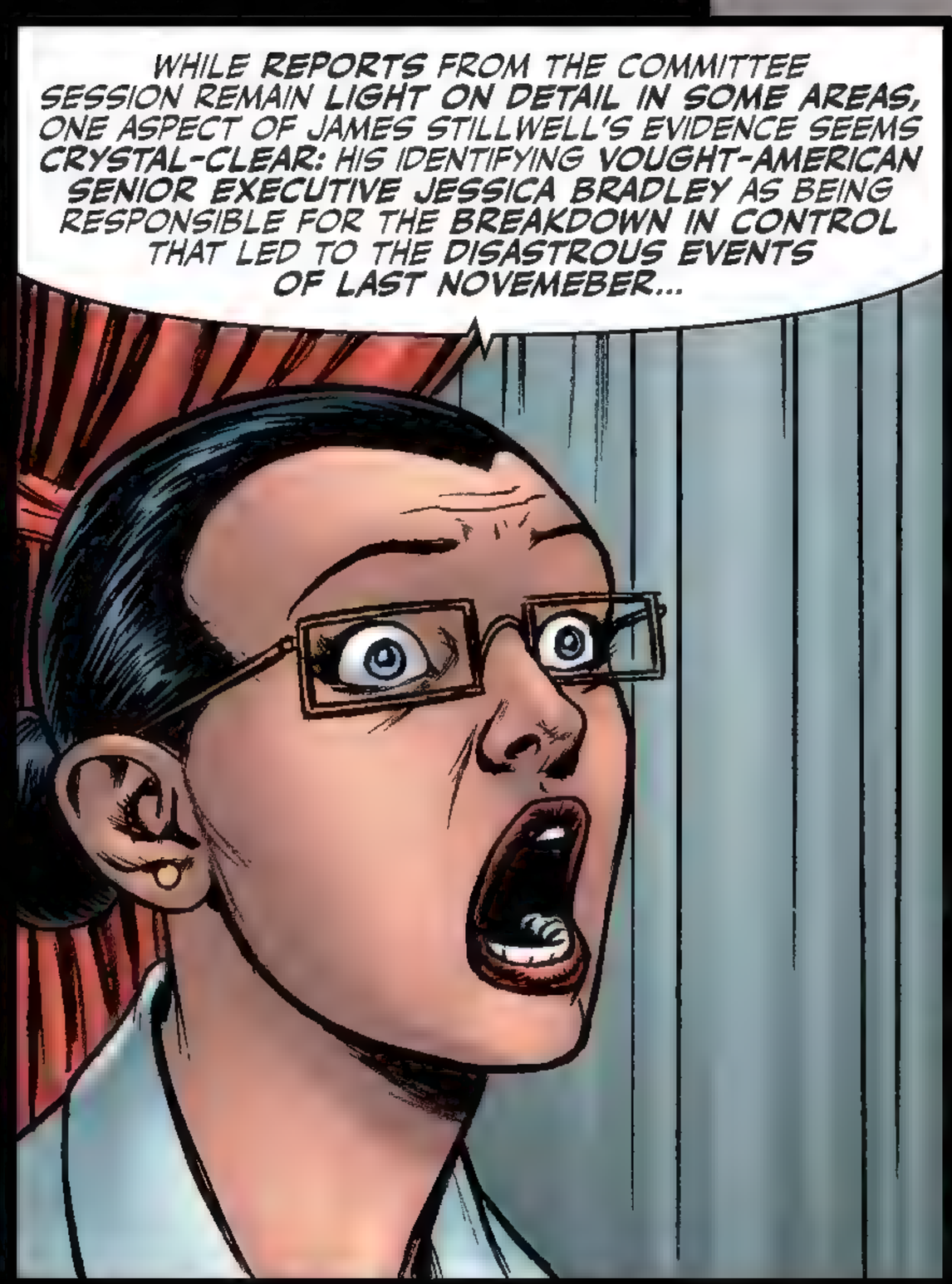
...SO, CALL ME BACK.
I DON'T KNOW WHY I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM YOU. TODAY WAS AWFUL, I REALLY NEED TO UNWIND.
CALL ME.
MUTE

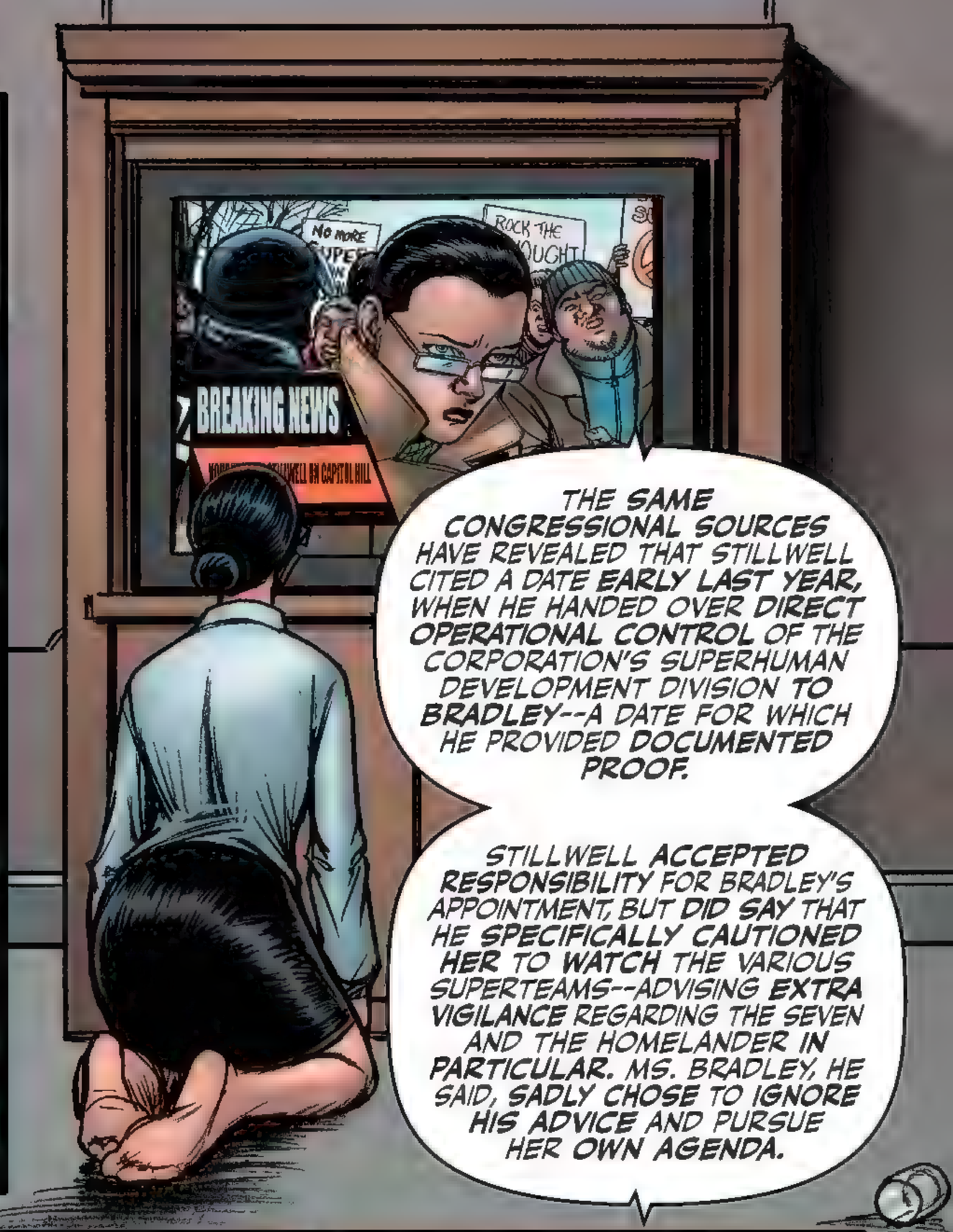
BREAKING NEWS
MUTE

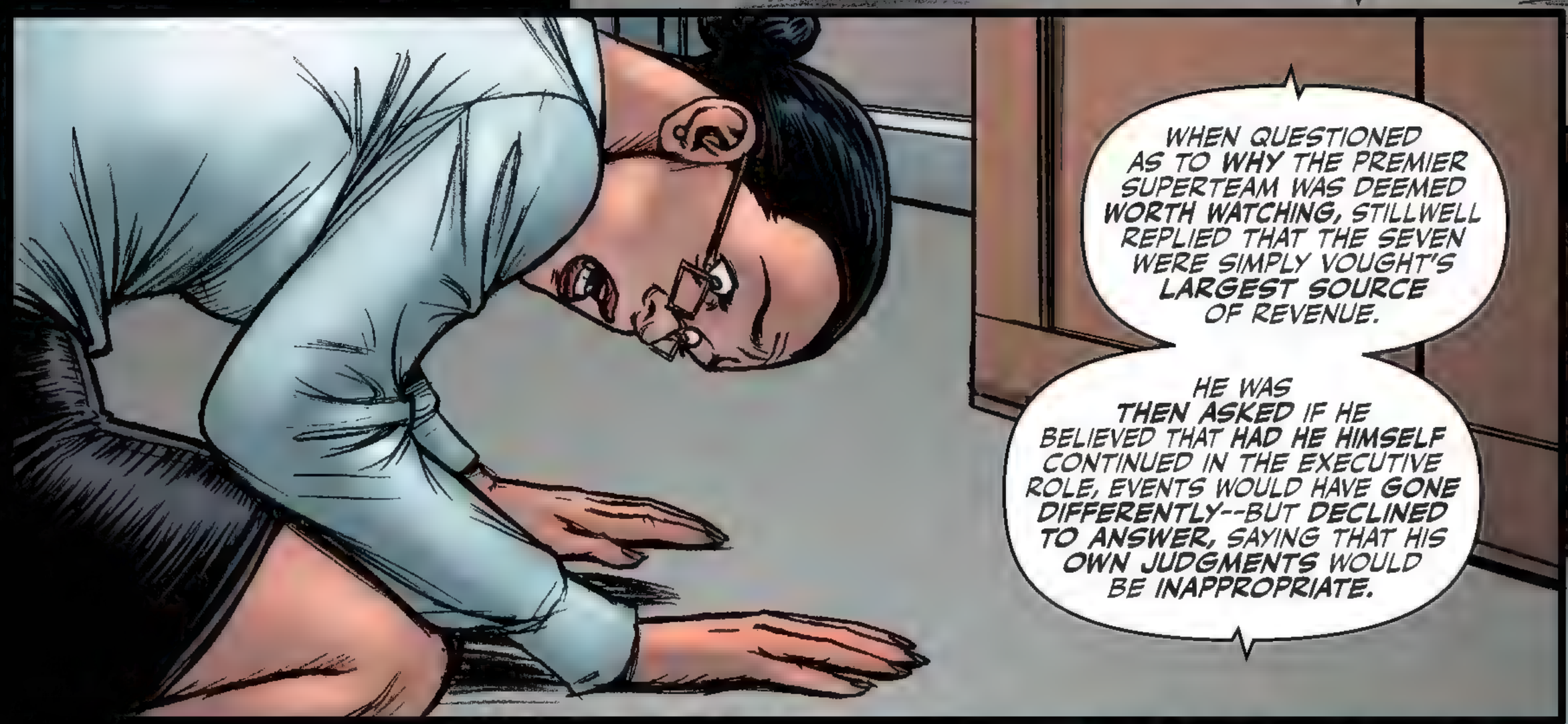
BREAKING NEWS
CAPITOL HILL
LIVE
MUTE

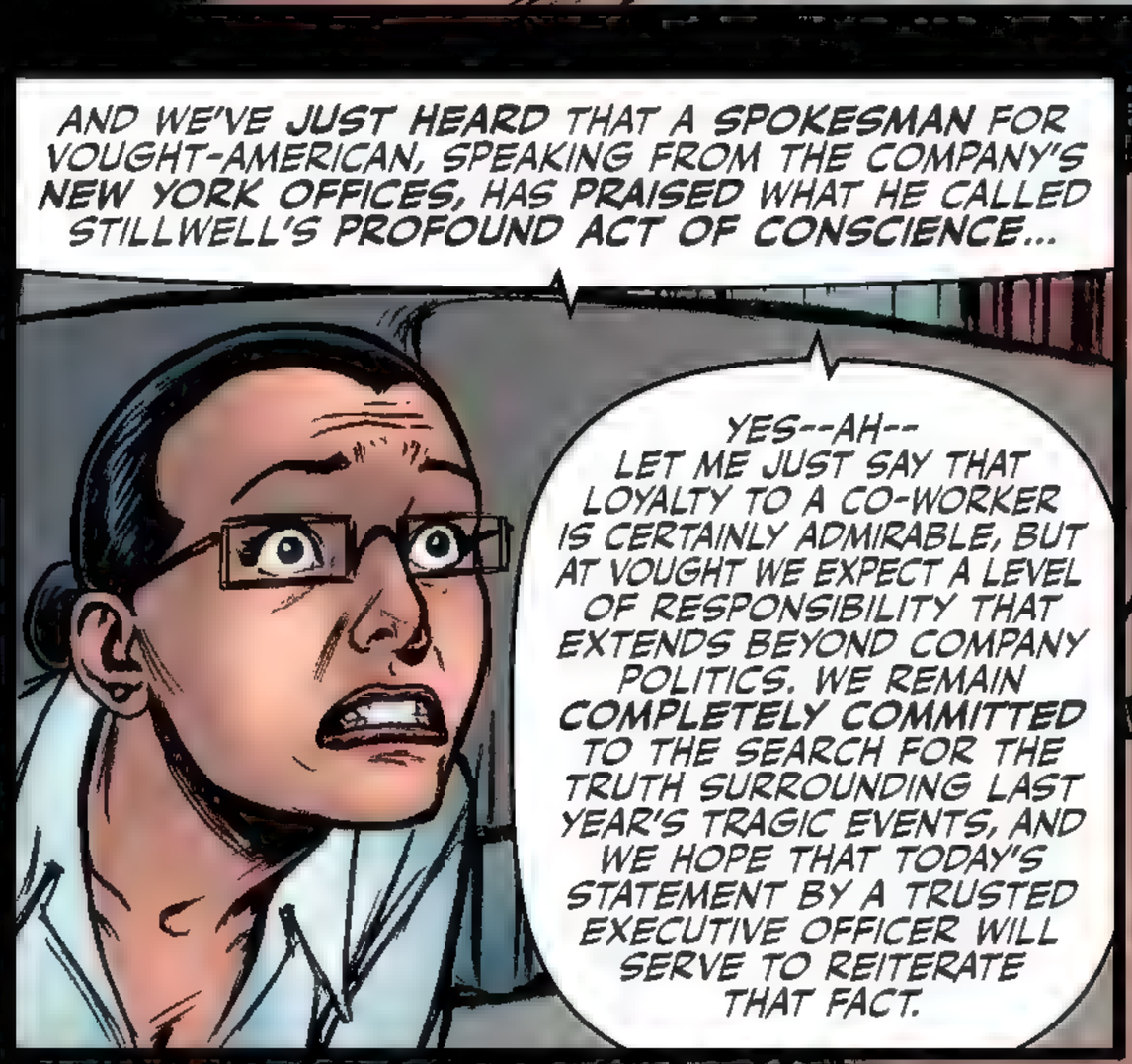

--CAN'T MAKE ANY COMMENT ON MY TESTIMONY TO CONGRESS...
CAN YOU TELL US WHAT CAUSED YOUR CHANGE OF HEART?
I'M AFRAID I HAVE NO COMMENT AT THIS TIME. I'M SORRY.
ALTHOUGH STILLWELL REMAINED TIGHT-LIPPED, IT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED THAT AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE WAS CONVENED THIS EVENING...
BREAKING NEWS

APPARENTLY--ACCORDING TO SOURCES WITHIN THE SENATE--AS A RESULT OF THE WITNESS CONTACTING A SENIOR CONGRESSIONAL FIGURE WITH A VIEW TO SUPPLYING FRESH EVIDENCE...
WHAT?


WHILE REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEE SESSION REMAIN LIGHT ON DETAIL IN SOME AREAS, ONE ASPECT OF JAMES STILLWELL'S EVIDENCE SEEMS CRYSTAL-CLEAR: HIS IDENTIFYING VOUGHT-AMERICAN SENIOR EXECUTIVE JESSICA BRADLEY AS BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BREAKDOWN IN CONTROL THAT LED TO THE DISASTROUS EVENTS OF LAST NOVEMEBER...


BREAKING NEWS
THE SAME CONGRESSIONAL SOURCES HAVE REVEALED THAT STILLWELL CITED A DATE EARLY LAST YEAR, WHEN HE HANDED OVER DIRECT OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE CORPORATION'S SUPERHUMAN DEVELOPMENT DIVISION TO BRADLEY--A DATE FOR WHICH HE PROVIDED DOCUMENTED PROOF.
STILLWELL ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR BRADLEY'S APPOINTMENT, BUT DID SAY THAT HE SPECIFICALLY CAUTIONED HER TO WATCH THE VARIOUS SUPERTEAMS--ADVISING EXTRA VIGILANCE REGARDING THE SEVEN AND THE HOMELANDER IN PARTICULAR. MS. BRADLEY, HE SAID, SADLY CHOSE TO IGNORE HIS ADVICE AND PURSUE HER OWN AGENDA.


WHEN QUESTIONED AS TO WHY THE PREMIER SUPERTEAM WAS DEEMED WORTH WATCHING, STILLWELL REPLIED THAT THE SEVEN WERE SIMPLY VOUGHT'S LARGEST SOURCE OF REVENUE.
HE WAS THEN ASKED IF HE BELIEVED THAT HAD HE HIMSELF CONTINUED IN THE EXECUTIVE ROLE, EVENTS WOULD HAVE GONE DIFFERENTLY--BUT DECLINED TO ANSWER, SAYING THAT HIS OWN JUDGMENTS WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE.

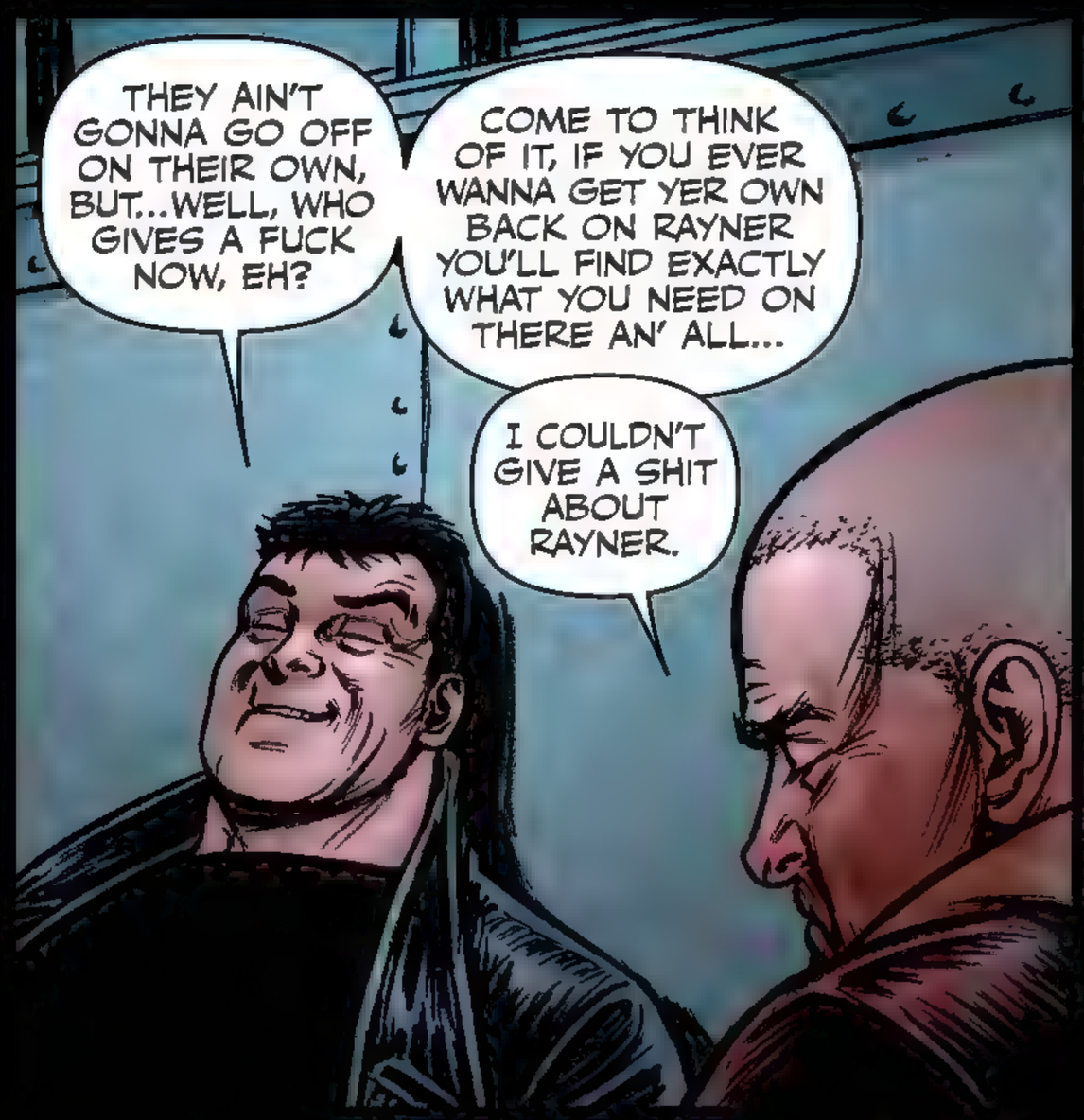

AND WE'VE JUST HEARD THAT A SPOKESMAN FOR VOUGHT-AMERICAN, SPEAKING FROM THE COMPANY'S NEW YORK OFFICES, HAS PRAISED WHAT HE CALLED STILLWELL'S PROFOUND ACT OF CONSCIENCE...
YES--AH-- LET ME JUST SAY THAT LOYALTY TO A CO-WORKER IS CERTAINLY ADMIRABLE, BUT AT VOUGHT WE EXPECT A LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY THAT EXTENDS BEYOND COMPANY POLITICS. WE REMAIN COMPLETELY COMMITTED TO THE SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH SURROUNDING LAST YEAR'S TRAGIC EVENTS, AND WE HOPE THAT TODAY'S STATEMENT BY A TRUSTED EXECUTIVE OFFICER WILL SERVE TO REITERATE THAT FACT.

THE BOTTOM LINE IS: AT VOUGHT-AMERICAN, WHAT HAPPENS IN THE BOARDROOM DOES NOT STAY IN THE BOARDROOM.
YOU'VE HAD YOUR EYE ON ME FOR NINE YEARS?

YOU WERE... WAITING FOR ME TO REACH A PARTICULAR POSITION, OR...?
ONE APPROPRIATE TO YOUR POTENTIAL. AS INDICATED BY YOUR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND GENERAL APTITUDE.
BUT YOU GOT THERE SOME TIME AGO; I'VE SIMPLY BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO APPROACH ME IN PERSON.
YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T BE QUITE SO QUICK TO DESPAIR, MS. BRADLEY. DON'T FORGET YOU'RE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE TEAM.
OF THE VOUGHT-AMERICAN FAMILY.
THE SECOND IS TO PROTECT MS. BRADLEY. SHE IS AS IMPORTANT TO THE FUTURE OF THIS COMPANY AS ANY OTHER SENIOR OFFICER.
HMM.
I'M NOT SURE IF I SHOULD TELL YOU, MS. BRADLEY.
BUT I FEEL I CAN RELAX AROUND YOU.
NO...!

DID YOU HAVE TO COME IN PAST THAT MOB OUTSIDE? DID NO ONE INFORM YOU THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL MORE DISCRETE ENTRANCES FOR OCCASIONS LIKE THIS?
NO...
THIS. IT'S THIS.
JESUS, I'M THE FACE OF IT NOW.
NO...
TAKE MY HAND. TAKE HEART.
IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY.
NO...
AND FOLLOWING ON FROM THAT... CONSIDERING HOW RADICAL SOME OF THE MOVES YOU'RE GOING TO BE MAKING ARE RUMORED TO BE...
THEN THE MOST SENSIBLE CHOICE--AT LEAST FROM YOUR POINT OF VIEW--
WOULD BE A FALL GUY.
NNNAAAAAAAAH!

I DON'T SUPPOSE...YOU WANNA TELL ME WHERE YOU'VE GOT ALL THESE BLOODY BOMBS HIDDEN...?
HAVE A LOOK ON ME PHONE.


THEY AIN'T GONNA GO OFF ON THEIR OWN, BUT...WELL, WHO GIVES A FUCK NOW, EH?
COME TO THINK OF IT, IF YOU EVER WANNA GET YER OWN BACK ON RAYNER YOU'LL FIND EXACTLY WHAT YOU NEED ON THERE AN' ALL...
I COULDN'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT RAYNER.

ALL THIS FOR ONE WOMAN.
YEAH.
NOT EVEN FOR HER, FOR HER MEMORY.
MM-HM.

YOU DIDN'T KNOW HER, HUGHIE. YOU DUNNO WHAT SHE MEANT TO ME.
WHAT SHE MADE ME INTO.

IS THERE ANYTHIN' YOU WOULDN'T DO FOR BLONDIE?

I--WHAT--
I KNOW YOU'RE STILL SEEIN' HER.
BUT-- BUT-- HOW--
WILD GUESS.

OH.
YOU'RE... YOU'RE NO' GONNA COME OUT WI' ALL SORTS O' HORRIBLE STUFF ABOUT HER, ARE YOU?
'CAUSE I JUST DON'T THINK I HAVE ENOUGH MEANNESS IN ME, TO SAY AWFUL THINGS ABOUT YER WIFE...

I AIN'T GONNA SAY NOTHIN' HORRIBLE.
GOOD.
SHE TURNED OUT TO BE PRETTY MUCH THE EXACT OPPOSITE O' WHAT YOU SAID SHE WAS.

GLAD TO HEAR IT.
YOU LOVE HER?

I DO. I REALLY DO.
BUT I THINK I MIGHT BE A BIT LATE THERE, 'CAUSE I'VE FUCKED THINGS UP ABOUT AS BADLY AS I COULD'VE.
WELL THEN YOU'RE A FUCKIN' NOB-END, AIN'T YOU?

EH...?
GRAB HOLD OF HER, HUGHIE.
WRAP YER ARMS AROUND HER.
BREATHE HER IN.
FEEL HER STRENGTH INSIDE YER OWN.
AN' NEVER, EVER, EVER LET HER GO.

SEE, THAT WAS SOMETHIN' BECKY TOLD ME. I DIDN'T QUITE GET IT AT THE TIME.
BUT SHE SAID MEN WITHOUT WOMEN, IT WASN'T A GOOD IDEA. AN' SHE WAS RIGHT.
'COS ALL THAT MACHO SHIT--THAT GUNFIGHTER, DIRTY HARRY BOLLOCKS--IT LOOKS TASTY, BUT IN THE END IT'S FUCKIN' SELF-DEFEATIN'.
IT JUST LEAVES YOU WITH BODIES IN DITCHES AN' BLOKES WITH HEADFULS O' BROKEN GLASS.
MEN ARE ONLY SO MUCH USE, HUGHIE.
MEN ARE BOYS.
I...AW, FUCK.
I JUST WISH... THINGS...

JESUS--!

CHRIST ALMIGHTY, THEY SCARED THE FUCKIN' SHITE OUTTA ME!

WHAT...?
I'M FUCKIN' SERIOUS. I'VE BROKEN ME NECK HERE, I CAN'T FEEL A BLEEDIN' THING.
WAIT A SECOND, NO, I--
THEY'LL BANG ME UP FOR LIFE. I DON'T GIVE A FUCK ABOUT DOIN' THE TIME-- BUT NOT TRAPPED IN ME OWN USELESS CARCASS, FOR GOD'S SAKE!
THERE'S NO BLOODY WAY I'M--
HUGHIE, YOU AIN'T GONNA LEAVE ME HERE LIKE A FUCKIN' RASPBERRY RIPPLE, COME ON...!
YOU DESERVE IT. YOU FUCKIN' WELL DESERVE IT.
I MIGHT WELL DO, BUT IF YOU'RE GONNA PUNISH ME YOU COULD AT LEAST LOOK ME IN THE BLOODY EYE. OR ARE YOU GONNA LEAVE IT UP TO SOME OTHER CUNT TO DO YER DIRTY WORK?
HUGHIE--
NO!
HUGHIE...
NO--!
THERE'S ONLY THE BLOODY TWO OF US LEFT, I'M NO' GONNA FUCKIN' PUT YOU DOWN LIKE A DOG...!
YEAH YOU FUCKIN' ARE, HUGHIE.
'COS OF ANNIE JANUARY.

AW FOR FUCK'S SAKE, I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T GONNA START IN ABOUT THAT! BUT OH AYE, THERE YOU GO, THE SAME OLD EVIL BLOODY--
NOT THE BIRD, SUNSHINE. I'M TALKIN' ABOUT YER DAD'S BOAT.

WH--
HE CHANGED THE NAME. THAT'S HOW MUCH HE LIKED HER.
I SPIKED HIS HEAD ON THE END O' THE TILLER. AFTER I'D FINISHED SPREADIN' YER MUM ALL OVER HER KITCHEN.

BOLLOCKS. *FUCKIN' BOLLOCKS.* THERE'S *NO WAY...*
SEVEN WATKINS LANE, LAST HOUSE ON THE RIGHT. I READ YER FILE, REMEMBER?
YOU SHOULDN'T'VE PISSED ME OFF FUCKIN' ABOUT WITH MALLORY, MY SON. THAT WAS BANG OUTTA ORDER, YOU SHOULDN'T'VE GONE AN' DONE THAT.

WHAT D'YOU WANNA HEAR ABOUT? THE WANKY BLOODY SEVENTIES WALLPAPER, OR THE STUPID OLD CUNT'S PIPE?
OR WHAT ABOUT THAT PONCEY FUCKIN' POEM UP ON THE WALL O' YER BEDROOM, FUCK ME, DID I HAVE A RIGHT LAUGH AT THAT...!

LOOK AT ME. FUCKIN' *LOOK AT ME.*
YOU KNOW I DONE IT.

FUCKER!
FUCKER!
CUNT!!

...NICE ONE, MATE.
HULLO...?
MAW!!

HUGHIE...!
ECK! ECK! IT'S HUGHIE ON THE PHONE!
MAW! JESUS FUCKIN' CHRIST, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT--?
OCH, SON, YE KEN I DON'T LIKE YE USIN' THAT SORT OF OUL' TALK, NOW...
MAW, PLEASE JUST TELL ME YOU AN' PAW ARE OKAY...!
O' COURSE WE ARE, WHY WOULDN'T WE BE? OCH, D'YE KEN WE HAD YER FRIEND HERE LAST YEAR, MISTER BUTCHER...?
WHAT... DID HE...
OH, HE WAS AN AWFULLY NICE MAN. AN' SO FUNNY, HIM AN' YER PAW GOT ON LIKE A HOOSE ON FIRE.
HE SAID HE WAS IN THE AREA AN' HE THOUGHT HE'D SEE WHERE YE GREW UP. WE SHOWED HIM ALL ROUND THE PLACE.
HE TOLD US HE WAS SORT O' YER BOSS, BUT I MUST SAY HE SEEMED VERY FOND O' YE.
HE ASKED US TO TELL YE HE SAID HELLO. I'M NO' SURE WHY, I THOUGHT HE'D PROBABLY SEE YE SOONER'N WE DID.

THE END

DYNAMITE
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Garth Ennis Darick Robertson
The BOYS
SEVENTY-TWO
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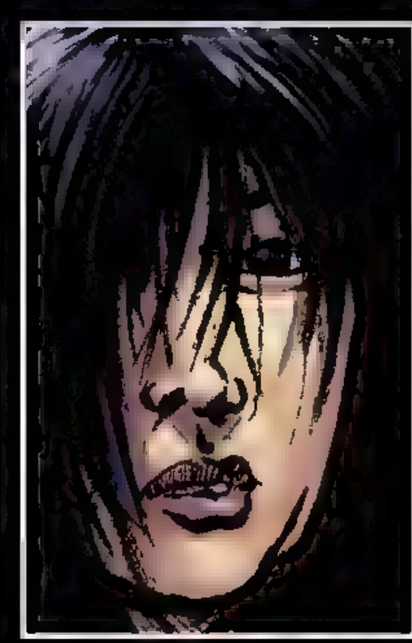
Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

SEVENTY-TWO

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.



Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

Story by: GARTH ENNIS

Art by: DARICK ROBERTSON
w/ RICHARD P. CLARK

Letters by: SIMON BOWLAND

Colors by: TONY AVIÑA

Cover art: DARICK ROBERTSON

The Boys created by: ENNIS & ROBERTSON

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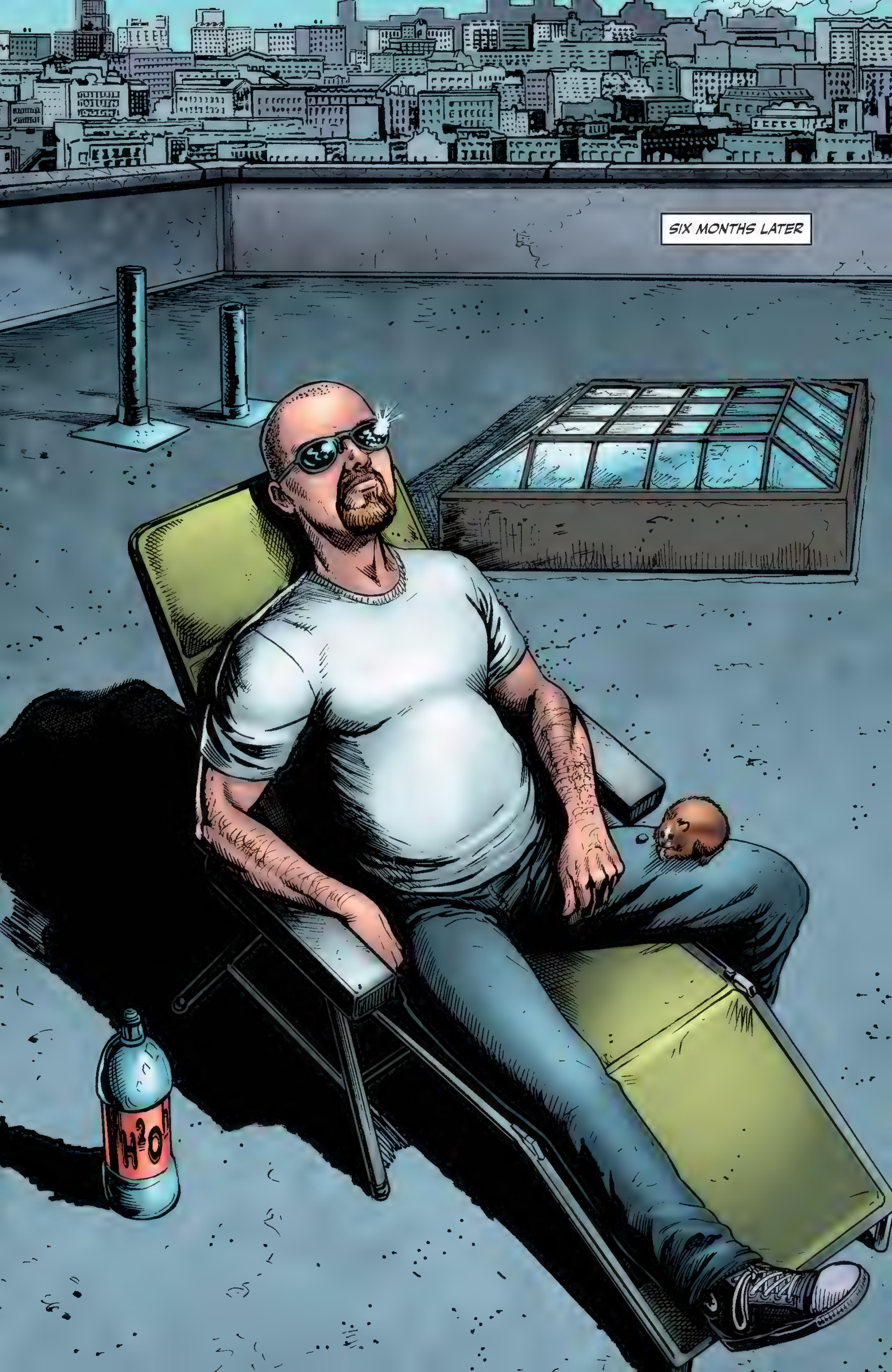
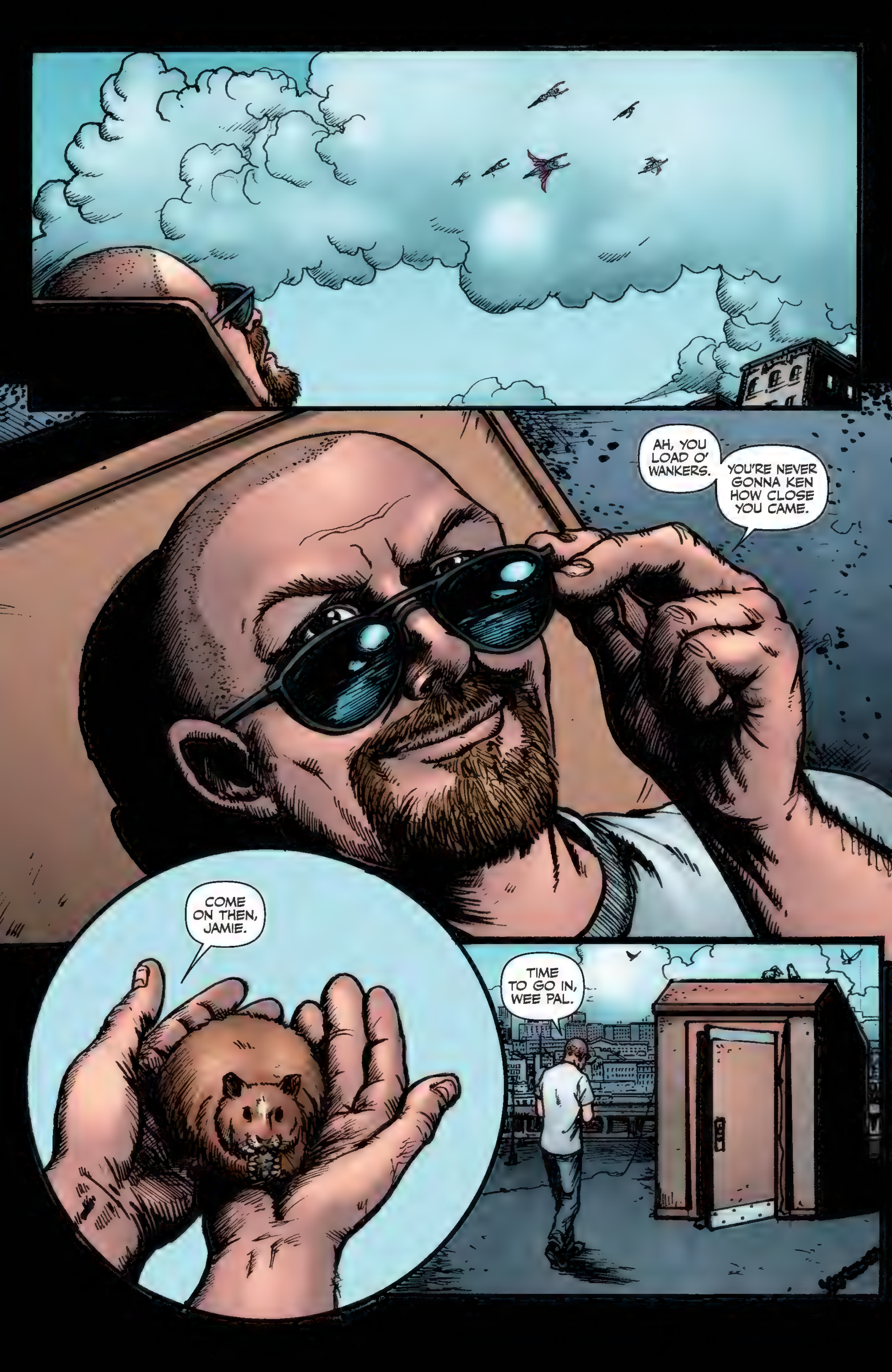
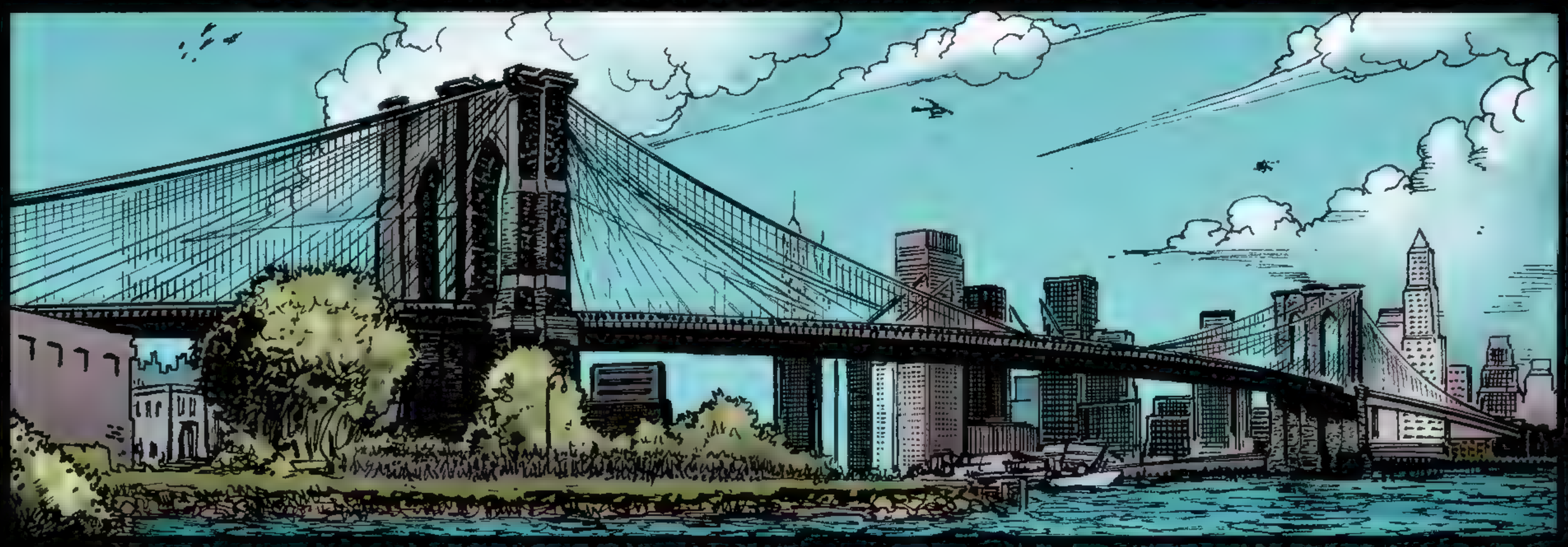
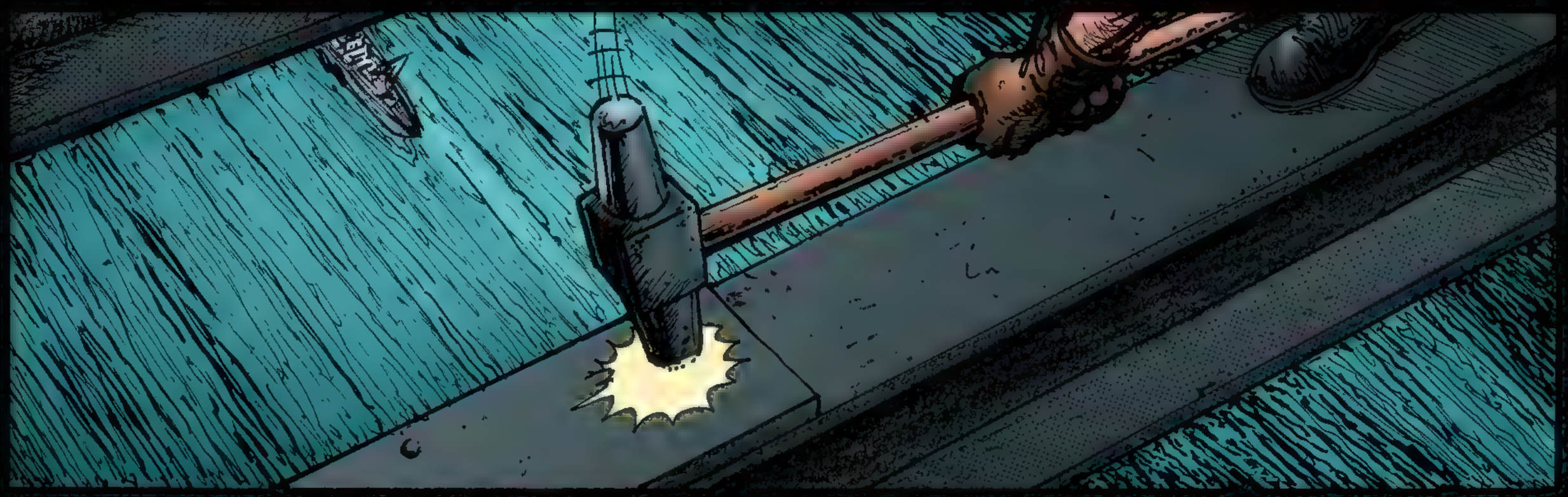

SIX MONTHS LATER
H2O

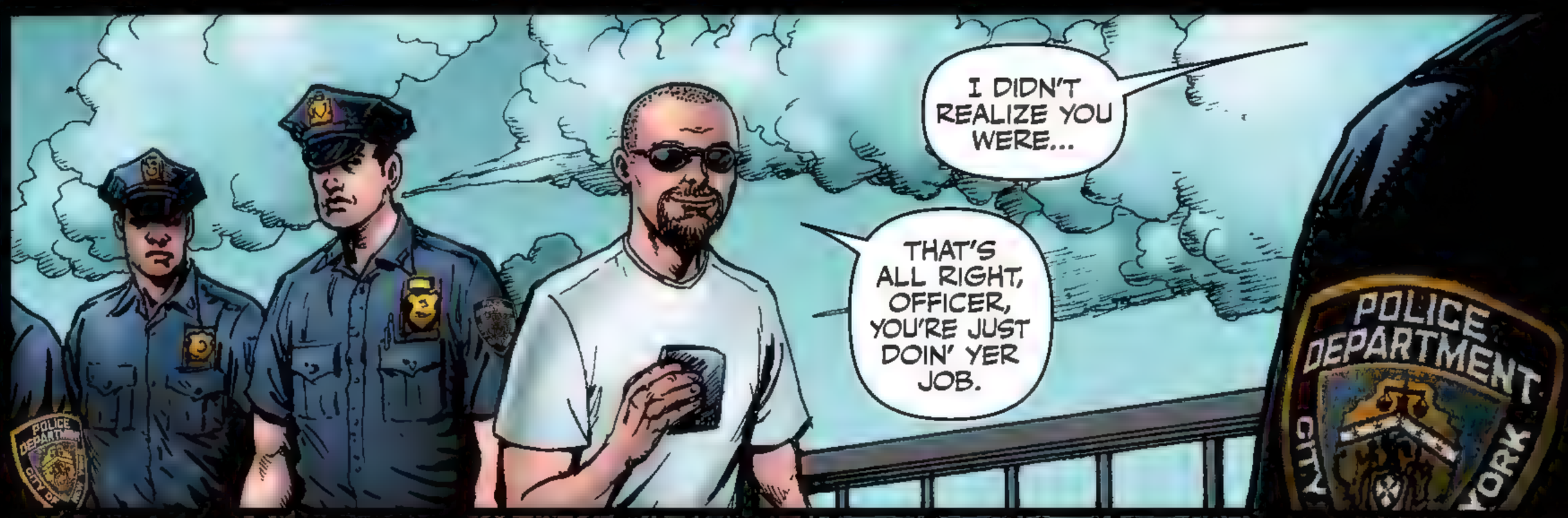

AH, YOU LOAD O' WANKERS.
YOU'RE NEVER GONNA KEN HOW CLOSE YOU CAME.
COME ON THEN, JAMIE.
TIME TO GO IN, WEE PAL.





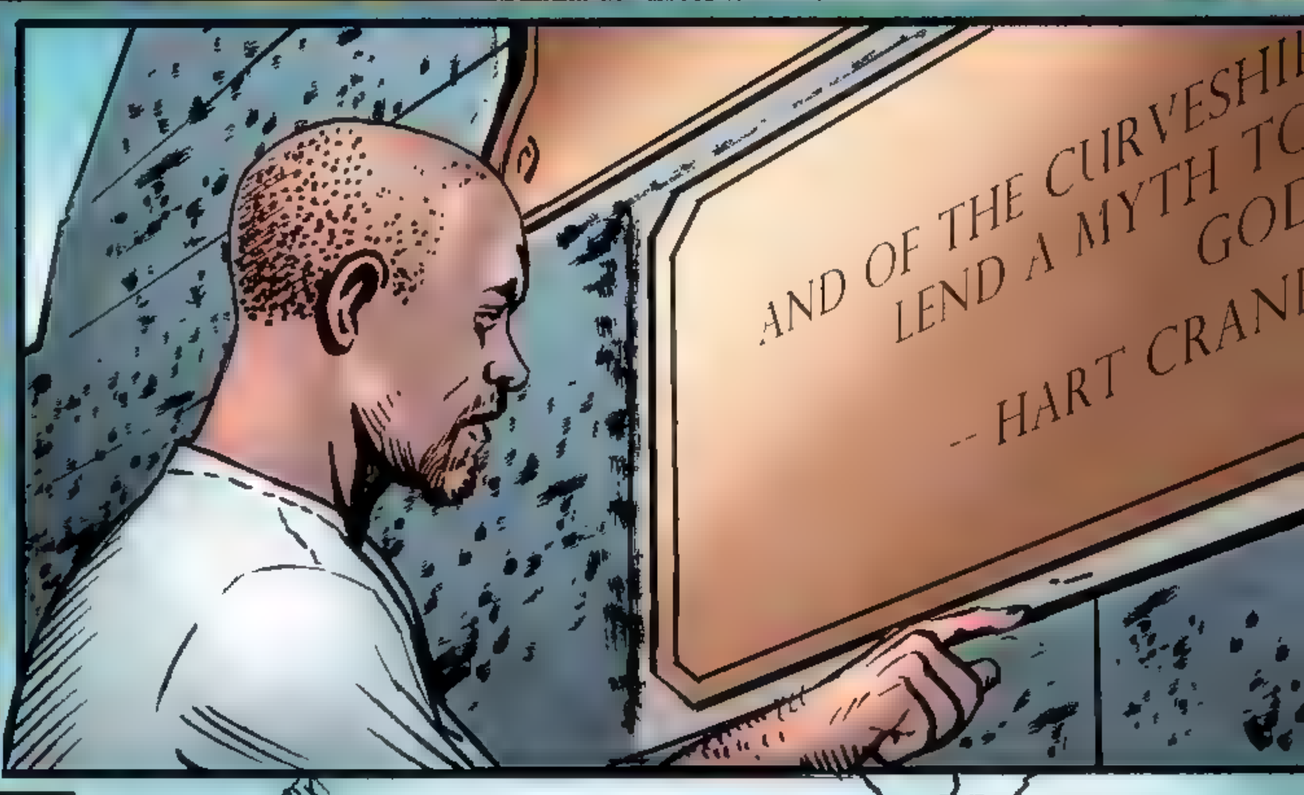
NO' BAD, YANKS.
NO' BAD AT ALL.

CONSTRUCTION'S STILL GOT A LONG WAY TO GO, IT'S DIGNITARIES ONLY FOR TODAY'S--
OH, SORRY, SIR.
BRID
CLOS


I DIDN'T REALIZE YOU WERE...
THAT'S ALL RIGHT, OFFICER, YOU'RE JUST DOIN' YER JOB.
POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF NEW YORK

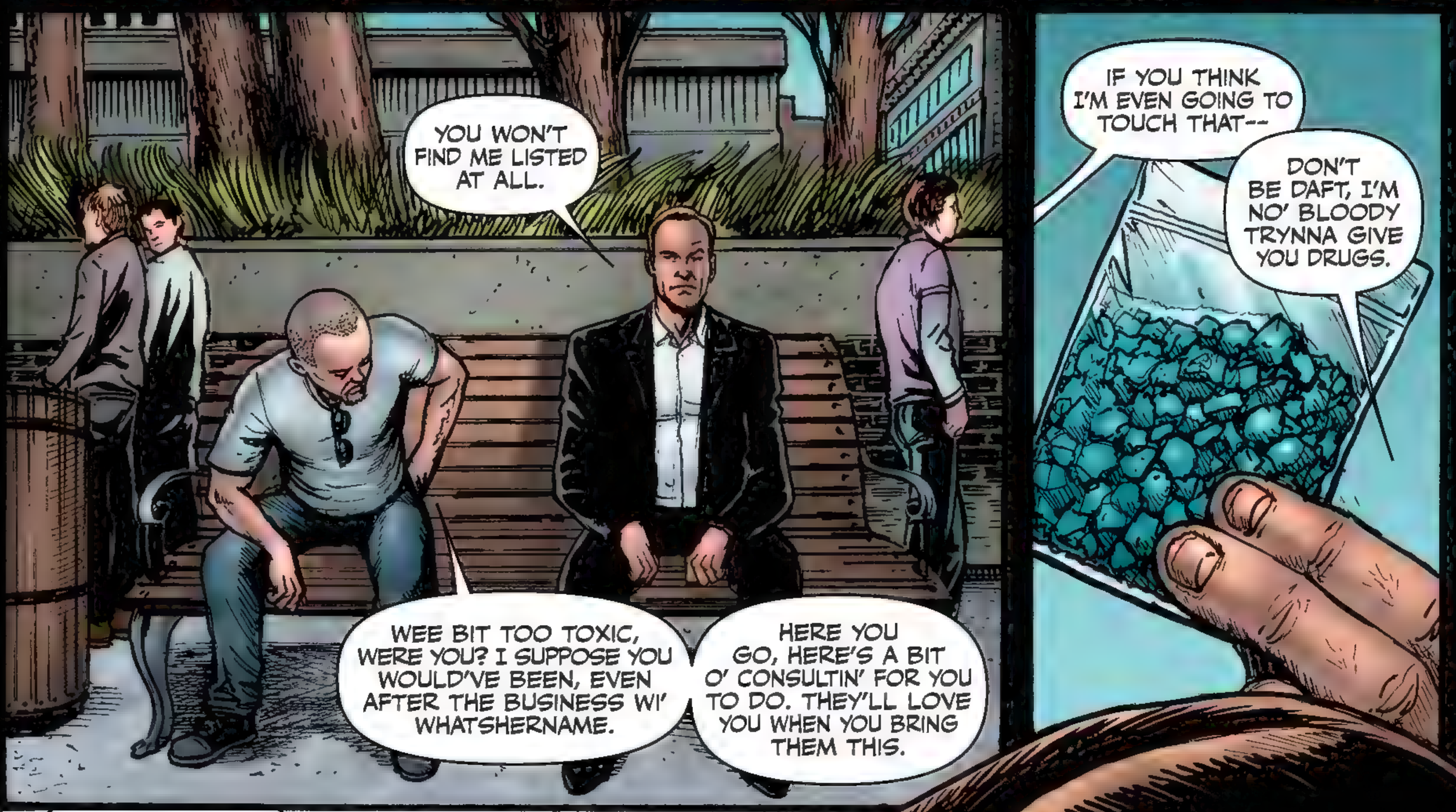
ATTENTION
AREA UNDER NYPD VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

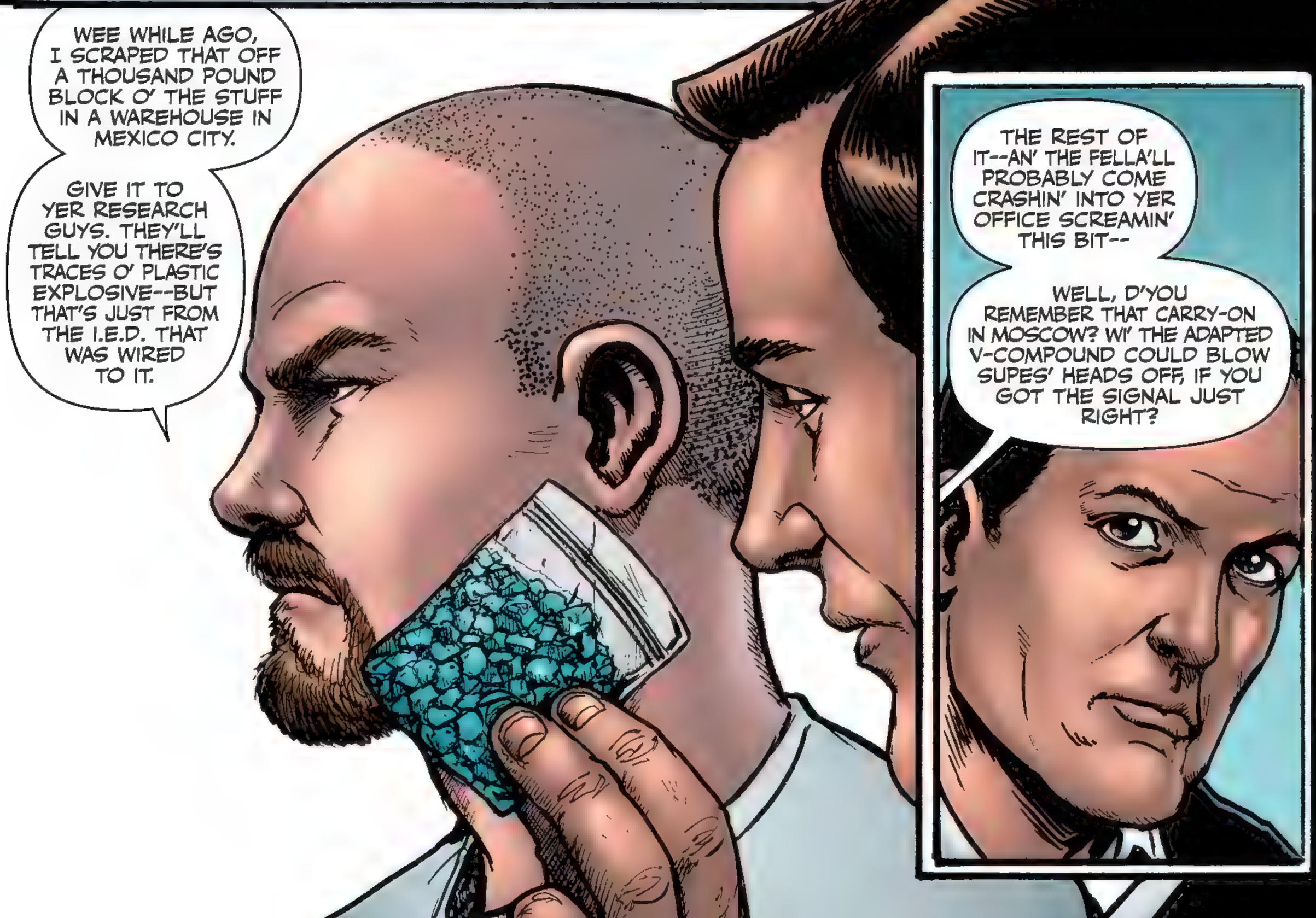
AND OF THE CURVESHIP
LEND A MYTH TO
GOD
-- HART CRANE

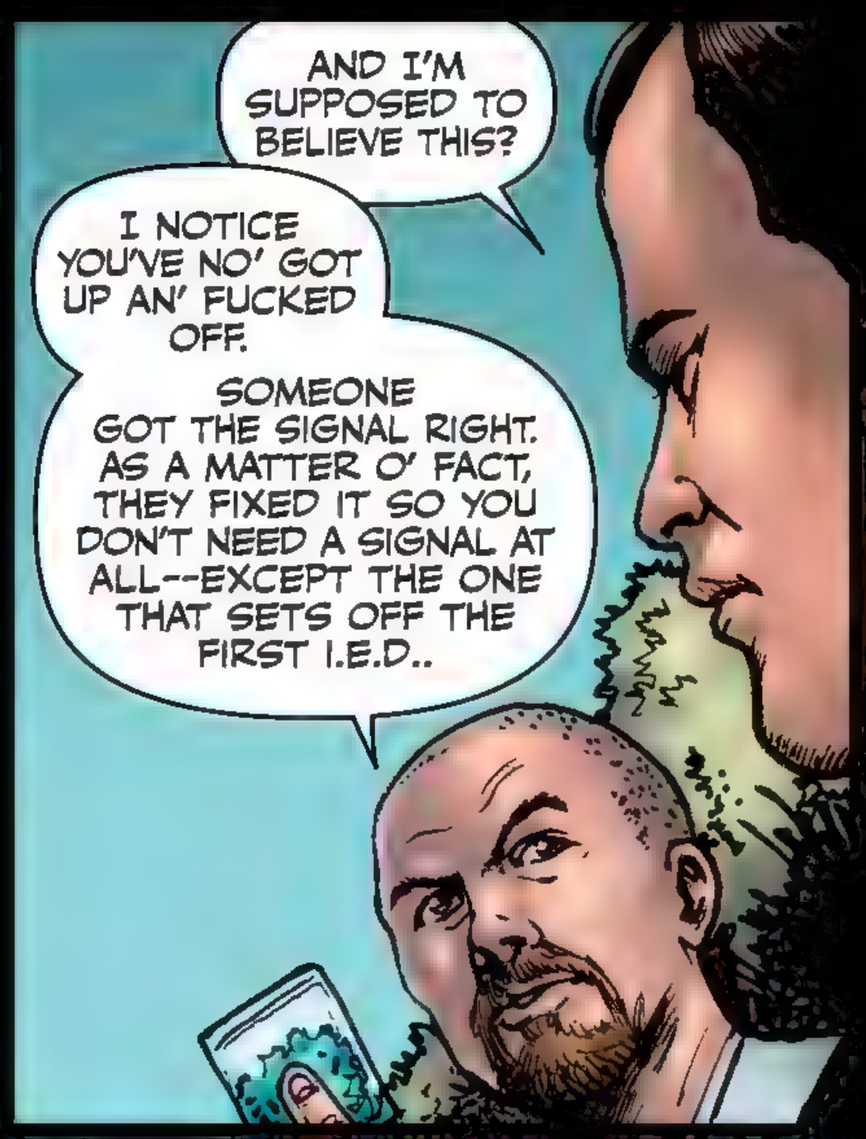


HAVE A SEAT.
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
MM--
YOU BEEN FOLLOWIN' THE ELECTION?
I WAS READIN' INTERVIEWS WI' MCCAIN AND OBAMA, AN' I DIDN'T SEE TROOP WITHDRAWALS MENTIONED ONCE.
TOO BAD. ALL THAT LOVELY MONEY YOU'D'VE MADE, IF YOU'D MANAGED TO GET SUPES INTO PAKISTAN.
IS THAT WHAT--
NO, I CALLED YOU 'CAUSE I SAW YOU'D REBRANDED. *AMERICAN CONSOLIDATED,* THAT'S NO' EXACTLY WHAT YOU'D CALL SUBTLE, IS IT?

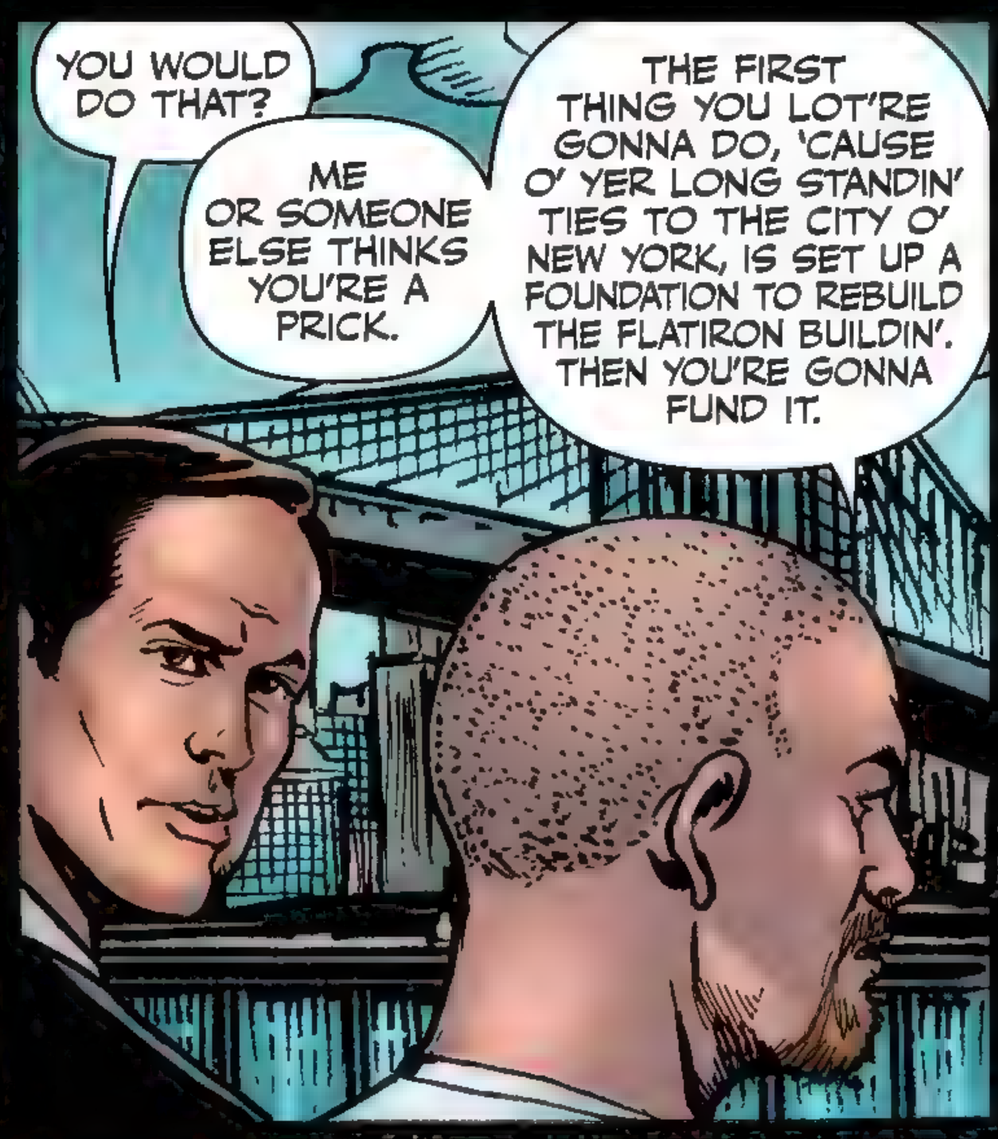
THAT WAS PRIMARILY FOR THE MARKETS. WHERE MEMORIES WORK TO DIFFERENT PRIORITIES.
AYE, I BET. WE SHOULD'VE GONE STRAIGHT AT THE FUCKIN' CORPORATION IN THE FIRST PLACE, INSTEAD O' WASTIN' OUR TIME ON THE DICKHEADS IN TIGHTS.
WHAT'RE YOU ON THE BOOKS AS NOW, THEN? CONSULTANT?


YOU WON'T FIND ME LISTED AT ALL.
WEE BIT TOO TOXIC, WERE YOU? I SUPPOSE YOU WOULD'VE BEEN, EVEN AFTER THE BUSINESS WI' WHATSHERNAME.
HERE YOU GO, HERE'S A BIT O' CONSULTIN' FOR YOU TO DO. THEY'LL LOVE YOU WHEN YOU BRING THEM THIS.
IF YOU THINK I'M EVEN GOING TO TOUCH THAT--
DON'T BE DAFT, I'M NO' BLOODY TRYNNA GIVE YOU DRUGS.


WEE WHILE AGO, I SCRAPED THAT OFF A THOUSAND POUND BLOCK O' THE STUFF IN A WAREHOUSE IN MEXICO CITY.
GIVE IT TO YER RESEARCH GUYS. THEY'LL TELL YOU THERE'S TRACES O' PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE--BUT THAT'S JUST FROM THE I.E.D. THAT WAS WIRED TO IT.
THE REST OF IT--AN' THE FELLA'LL PROBABLY COME CRASHIN' INTO YER OFFICE SCREAMIN' THIS BIT--
WELL, D'YOU REMEMBER THAT CARRY-ON IN MOSCOW? WI' THE ADAPTED V-COMPOUND COULD BLOW SUPES' HEADS OFF, IF YOU GOT THE SIGNAL JUST RIGHT?


AND I'M SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE THIS?
I NOTICE YOU'VE NO' GOT UP AN' FUCKED OFF.
SOMEONE GOT THE SIGNAL RIGHT. AS A MATTER O' FACT, THEY FIXED IT SO YOU DON'T NEED A SIGNAL AT ALL--EXCEPT THE ONE THAT SETS OFF THE FIRST I.E.D..

WHICH THEN SETS OFF THE NEXT TWO HUNDRED AN' FIFTY-NINE, IN SEQUENCE. SUDDENLY MAKIN' THIS A VERY DIFFERENT PLANET INDEED.


YOU WOULD DO THAT?
ME OR SOMEONE ELSE THINKS YOU'RE A PRICK.
THE FIRST THING YOU LOT'RE GONNA DO, 'CAUSE O' YER LONG STANDIN' TIES TO THE CITY O' NEW YORK, IS SET UP A FOUNDATION TO REBUILD THE FLATIRON BUILDIN'. THEN YOU'RE GONNA FUND IT.

WE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED THERE...
LIFE'S A FUCKER THAT WAY.
THE OTHER THING YOU'RE GONNA DO... IS WATCH YERSELVES.
I'M NO' NAÏVE. I KEN THERE'S STILL PLENTY O' SUPES ABOUT, AN I KEN YOU'RE STILL GONNA TRY AN' TURN A PROFIT OFF THEM. AN' I'M NO' GONNA COMMIT GENOCIDE JUST TO TRY AN' STOP THE TIDE FROM COMIN' IN.
SO IT'S BUSINESS AS USUAL. FUN AN' GAMES AN' PRETTY COLORS. BUT YOU SEE THE FIRST TIME YOU TAKE THOSE FLYIN' FUCKIN' ARSEHOLES ANYWHERE NEAR ANY COUNTRY'S DEFENSE INDUSTRY...?

YOU SHOULDN'T GET SO SENTIMENTAL ABOUT THIS PLACE, YOU KNOW.
EH...?
IT'S A MERCANTILE TOWN.

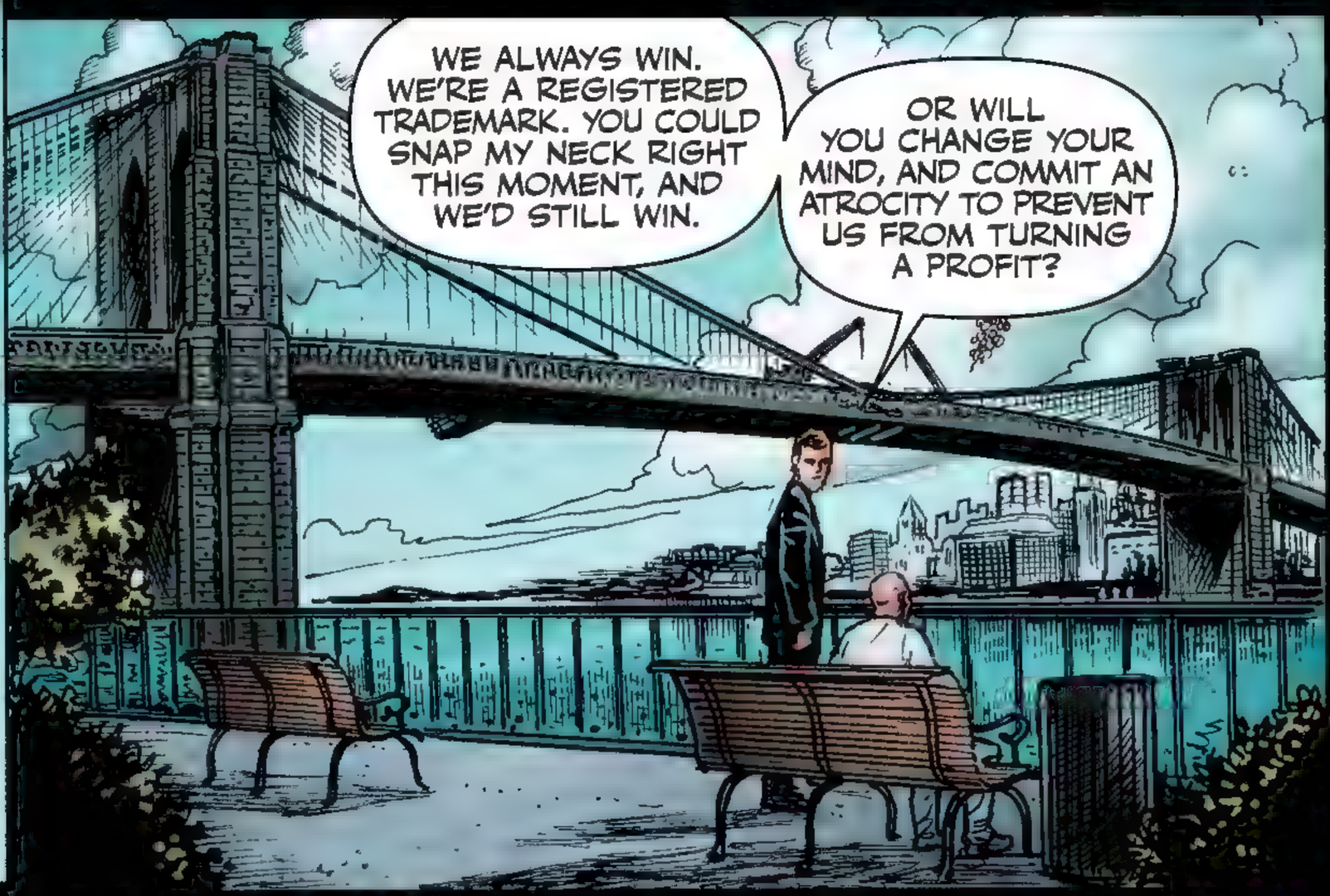
IT ALWAYS WAS.
AND YOU AND I JUST DID BUSINESS.

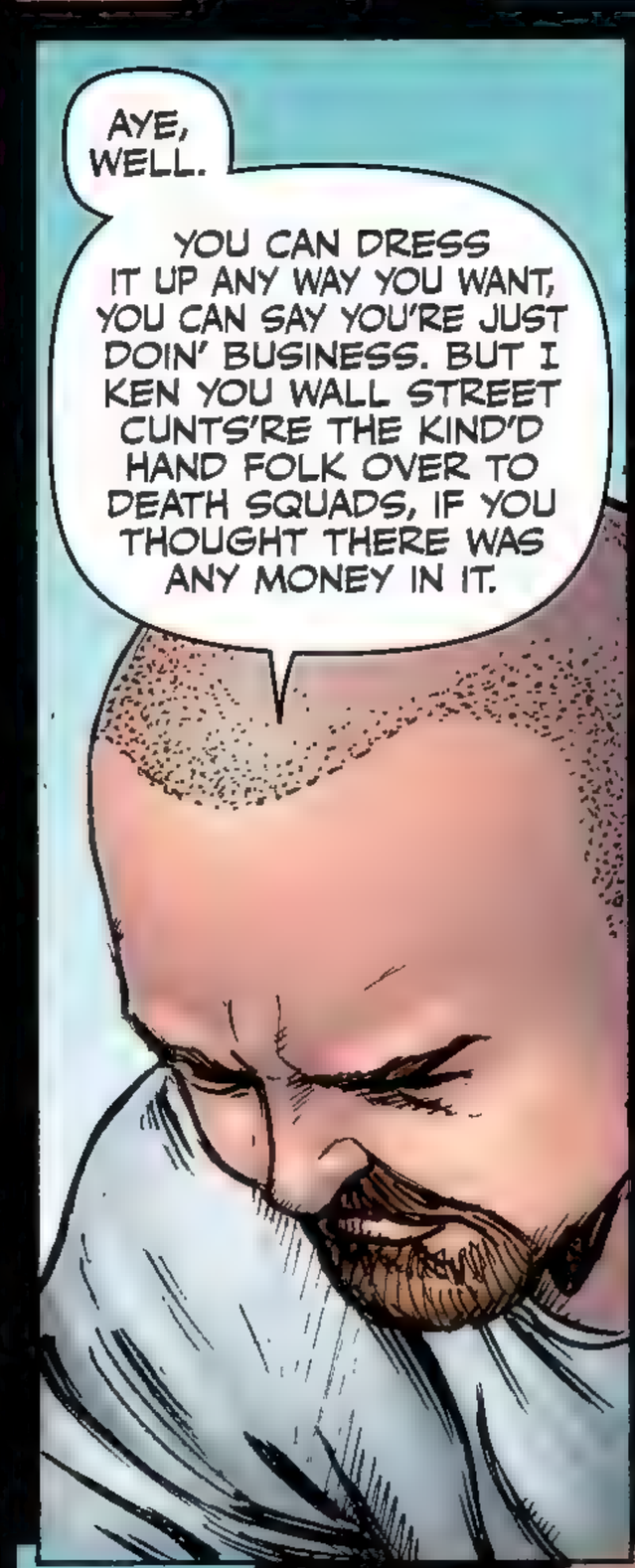
JESUS CHRIST, YOU BLOODLESS FUCKIN'--
WHO *ARE YOU*...?

I'M AN EXPRESSION OF THE CORPORATION.

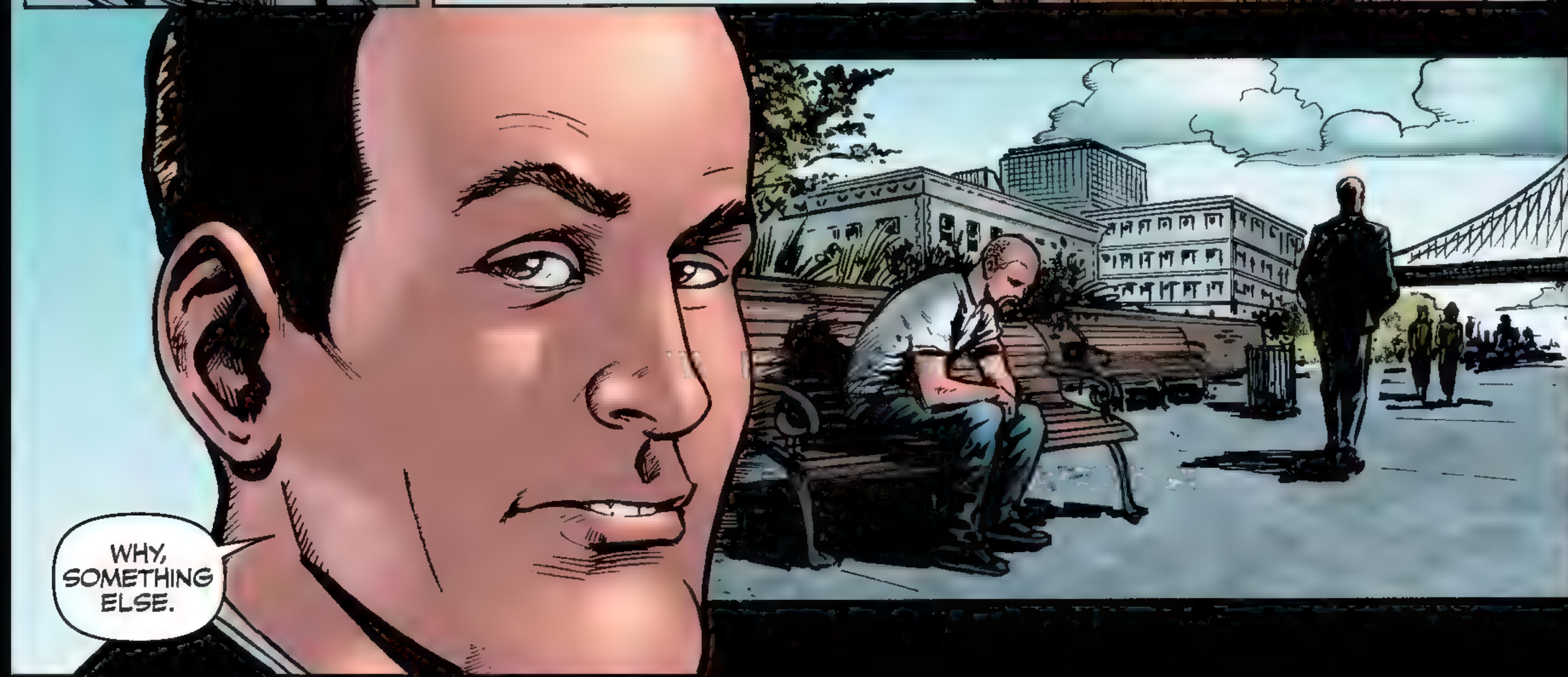
I'M THE VOICE THAT SAYS-- YOU'RE RIGHT, SUE US.
THAT NEVER GETS UPSET.

YOU THINK YOU'VE WON...
DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE?


WE ALWAYS WIN. WE'RE A REGISTERED TRADEMARK. YOU COULD SNAP MY NECK RIGHT THIS MOMENT, AND WE'D STILL WIN.
OR WILL YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, AND COMMIT AN ATROCITY TO PREVENT US FROM TURNING A PROFIT?


AYE, WELL.
YOU CAN DRESS IT UP ANY WAY YOU WANT, YOU CAN SAY YOU'RE JUST DOIN' BUSINESS. BUT I KEN YOU WALL STREET CUNTS'RE THE KIND'D HAND FOLK OVER TO DEATH SQUADS, IF YOU THOUGHT THERE WAS ANY MONEY IN IT.

I DON'T WORK ON WALL STREET. THIS IS A POINTLESS CONVERSATION.
WHAT'LL YOU DO?
YOU'LL NEVER SELL SUPES TO THE U.S. MILITARY, WITH OR WITHOUT WHAT I'VE GOT HANGIN' OVER YOU.
WHAT'LL YOU DO?


WHY, SOMETHING ELSE.

...BECAUSE THIS COUNTRY SUPPORTS ITS TROOPS! AMERICA LOOKS AFTER ITS WARRIORS! THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO FIGHT OUR WARS, WE DON'T JUST SHUT THEM UP WITH A COUPLE OF MEDALS AND PUT THEM OUT TO GRASS...!

SUSAN L. RAYNER FOR SENATOR

BUT I HAVE SPOKEN TO VETERANS' GROUPS AND WOUNDED HEROES RIGHT ACROSS THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS, AND I CAN TELL YOU THERE IS MUCH WORK YET TO BE DONE.

THE REPUBLICANS PAY LIP SERVICE TO THE TROOPS THEIR ADMINISTRATION SENT TO WAR, BUT WHAT HAVE THEY ACTUALLY *DONE* FOR THEM? WELL, I'LL TELL YOU. THEY'VE CUT PROGRAM AFTER PROGRAM, CLOSED HOSPITAL AFTER HOSPITAL. THEY *DON'T CARE.*

SUSAN L. RAYNER FOR SENATOR

WHEN I PROVIDED THE DATA THAT LED TO THE DEFEAT OF LAST YEAR'S SUPERHUMAN INSURRECTION, MY *FIRST THOUGHT* WAS FOR THE *PILOTS AND MARINES* WHO WOULD HAVE TO DO BATTLE THAT DAY. AND I RESOLVED THEN AND THERE THAT WERE THEY TO BE WOUNDED, I WOULD *NOT ABANDON* THOSE AMERICAN WARRIORS--ANY MORE THAN I WOULD LEAVE MY *OWN AGENTS,* THE UNSUNG HEROES OF SO MANY COVERT CONFLICTS, TO TWIST IN THE WIND.

I SAID TO MYSELF--I *CANNOT* SIMPLY WALK AWAY FROM THIS. I WILL *SEEK ELECTION* TO THE SENATE. AND I WILL COME *BACK* TO WASHINGTON AND *FIGHT,* FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO FIGHT FOR *US*...

AND I *ALSO* SAID--

I'M A WHORE!

I'M A WHORE, I'M A WHORE! I'M A FUCKING WHORE!
HEH HEH HEH HEH!
I'M A DIRTY FUCKING WHORE GETTING FUCKED BY A PIG!
HA HA HA HA HA HA...!
FOR
RAYNER SENATOR

OH GOD, OH FUCK--OH JESUS CHRIST, YOU'RE TEARING ME APART, YOU BASTARD--!
OH, THAT'S IT, THAT'S IT! OH, FUCK!
OH GOD I'M GONNA COME, JUST LIKE THE DIRTY WHORE I AAAAAAAAAAHH
RAYNER IS RIGHT

UHH... UHH...UHH... AAAAH!!
FIND IT, YOU ASSHOLES, WHERE THE FUCK IS IT COMING FROM--?
OH MY FUCKING GOD, YOU'RE GOING TO KILL ME...!

OH, FUCK MY FUCKING SLUTTY CUNT...THAT'S RIGHT, FUCK MY WHORE'S CUNT OH GOD--
HA HA HA! HA HA HA!
YOU MOTHERFUCKER-- OH, WHY AM I DOING THIS, WHAT A WHORE--!
WHO THE FUCK COULD--
NO.

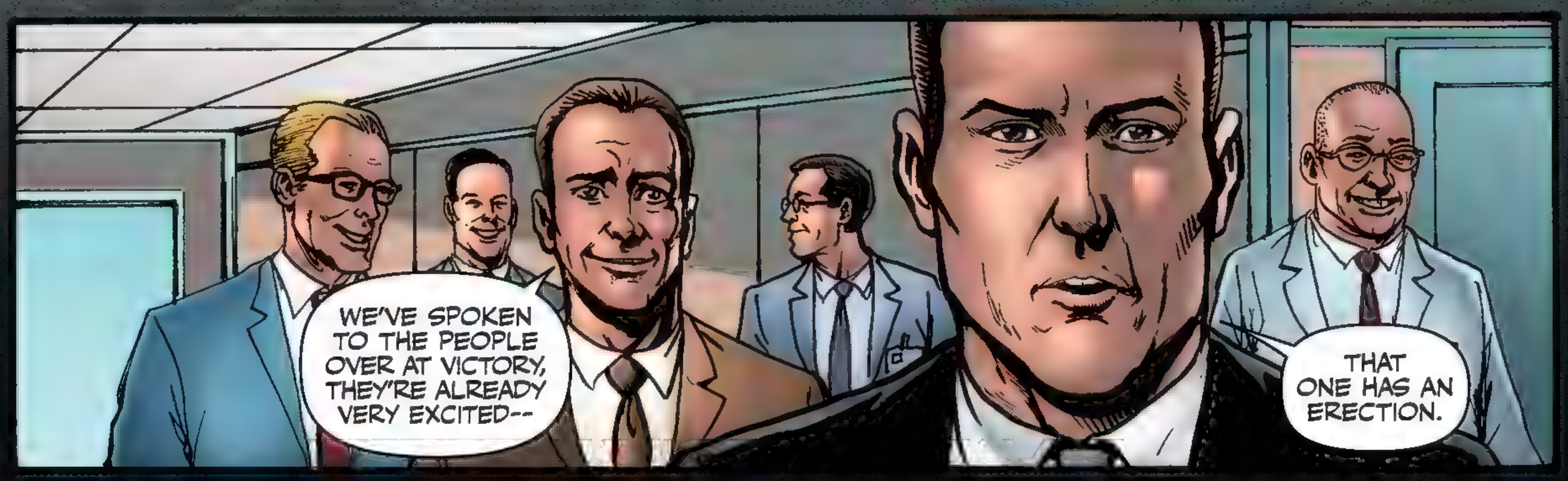
SUSAN RAYNER IS A WHORE
HA HA HA HA HA!
RAYNE

HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH...!

YOU'RE A NASTY WEE MAN, AREN'T YOU, MONKEY?
THEN AGAIN, MAYBE SHE SHOULD'VE SEEN SENSE AN' JUST CONFIRMED YER PROMOTION.
YOU'RE WELCOME. TA FOR THE PASSPORT, BY THE WAY.
RIGHT, I'M GONNA HAVE TO HANG UP NOW. I THINK I CAN HEAR WHAT YOU'RE DOIN' THERE.
CHEERIO.

I WOULDN'T SAY BY HIS FINGERNAILS. I WOULDN'T EVEN SAY LAME DUCK.
BUT EVERYONE KNOWS WHAT HE PULLED, EVERYONE KNOWS HE ESCAPED THE HANGMAN BY THE SKIN OF HIS TEETH, AND HE'S GOING TO NEED A WIN--A BIG WIN--TO REMIND THE POWERS THAT BE HOW VALUABLE HE IS...
ARE THEY READY?
I SAW IT COMING
SHOUTOUT
OH, THERE YOU ARE, SIR, WE DIDN'T HEAR YOU COME IN. YES, THEY'RE READY...
THEN LET'S TAKE A LOOK.
WE THOUGHT THE BEST WAY FORWARD WOULD BE TO EMPHASIZE NOT JUST PURITY BUT *CONFORMITY.* YOU KNOW--THE OTHERS WENT WRONG BECAUSE THEY STRAYED FROM THE PATH, THEY WOULDN'T FOLLOW THE RULES...
BUT THE NEW GENERATION DON'T EVEN THINK THAT WAY. THERE'S AN IDEAL TO LIVE UP TO HERE. A SINGLENESS OF PURPOSE.

WE'RE THINKING OF SIMPLY CALLING THEM *TRUE.*



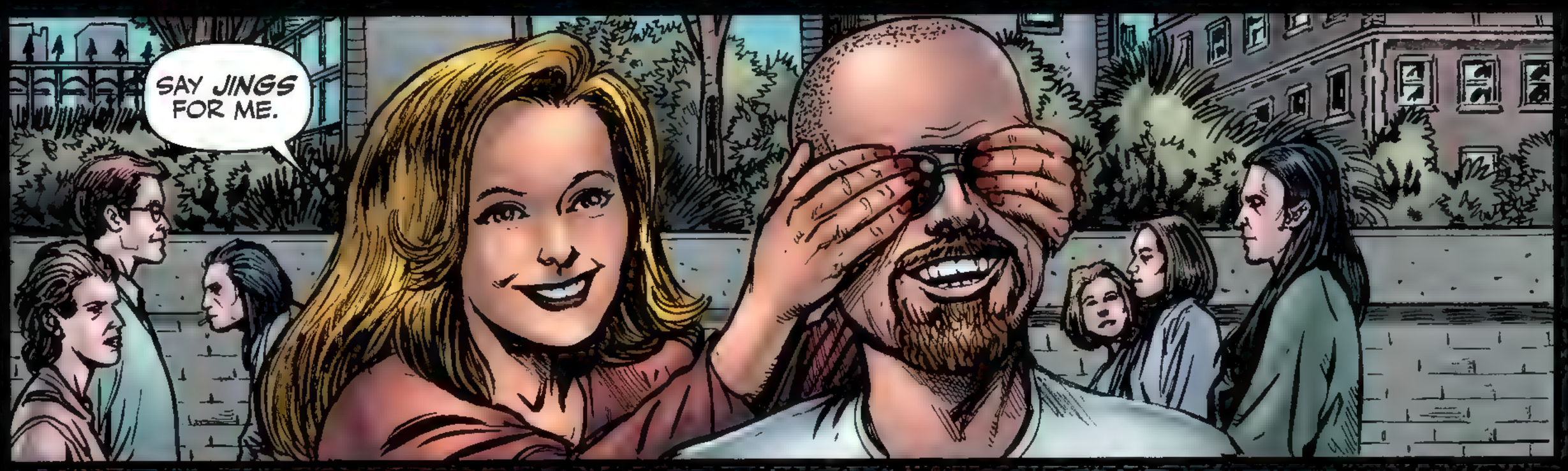
THAT ONE IS SUFFERING SOME KIND OF WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS.
THAT ONE IS PLAINLY THE DEEP.

YES...WELL, WE DID EXPERIMENT WITH VARIOUS FORMS OF BEHAVIOURAL INHIBITOR, BUT THE RESULTS...
LET'S JUST SAY THEY MADE THE RESURRECTION PROCESS LOOK GOOD.
YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO START AGAIN.

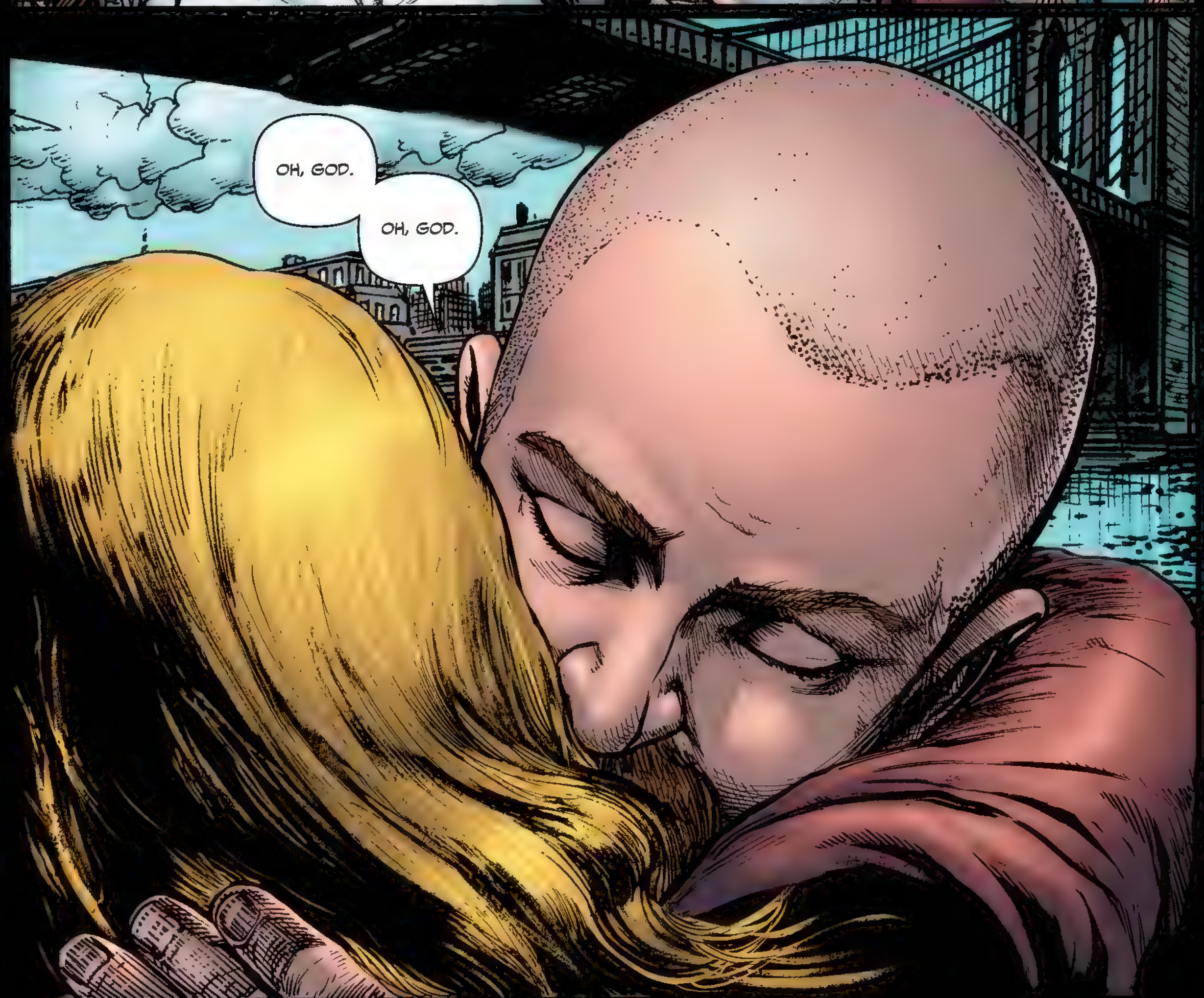
WHAT?
WHAT *WITH?*
SOMETHING THAT ISN'T JUST THE SAME OLD SHIT DRESSED UP.

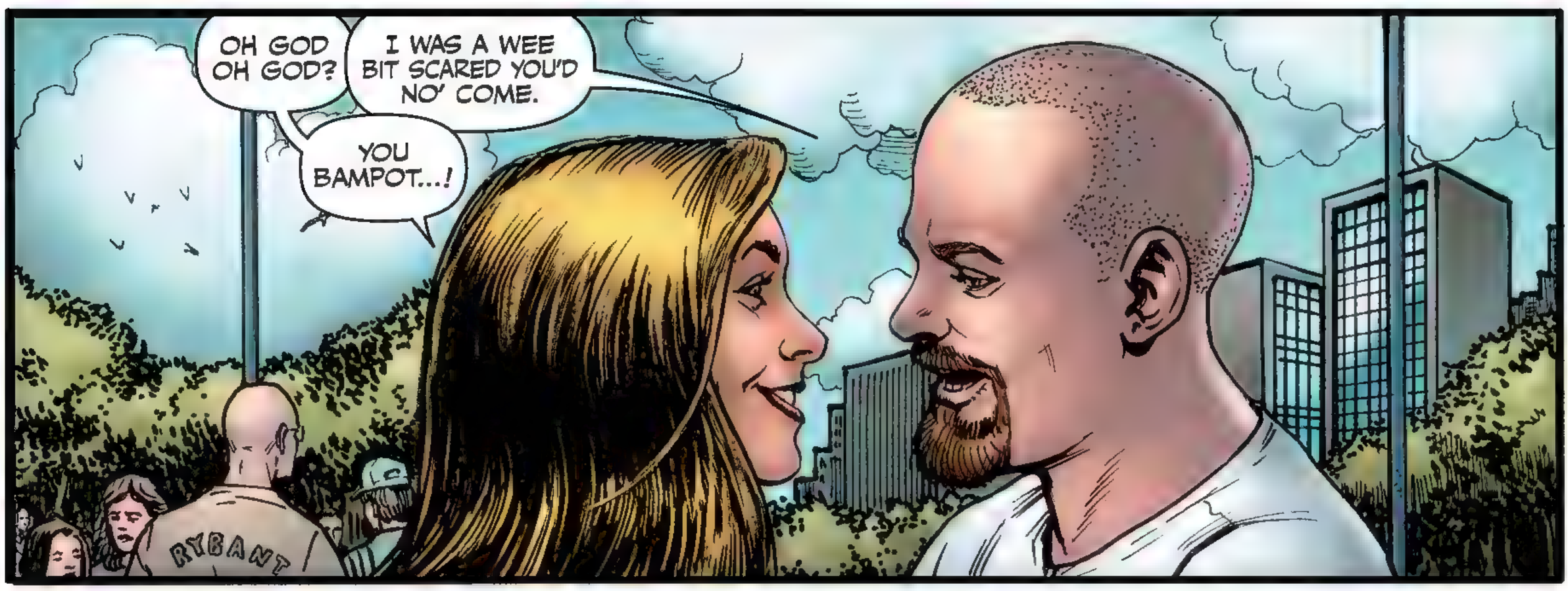
AND WHERE EXACTLY DO YOU PROPOSE TO FIND THAT?
THEY'RE NEVER GOING TO CHANGE, YOU KNOW, THEY'RE ALWAYS GOING TO HAVE EXACTLY THE SAME SET OF PROBLEMS...!

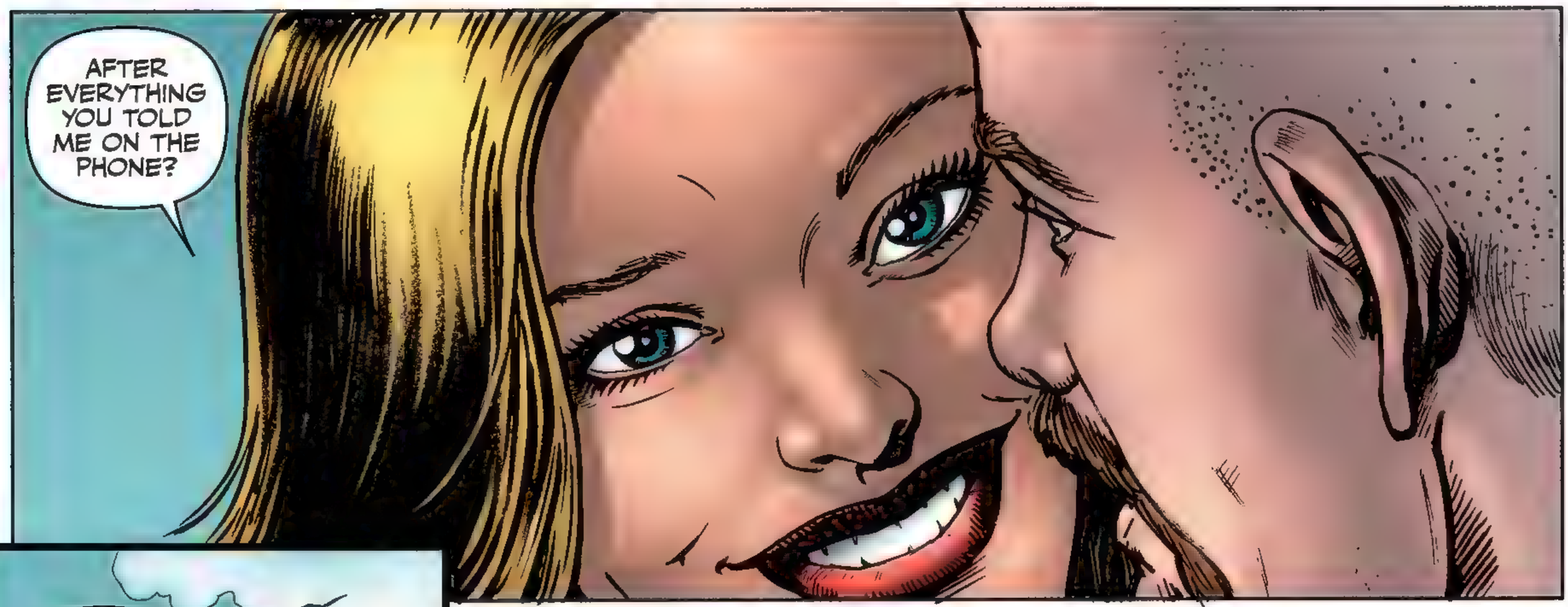
BAD PRODUCT.

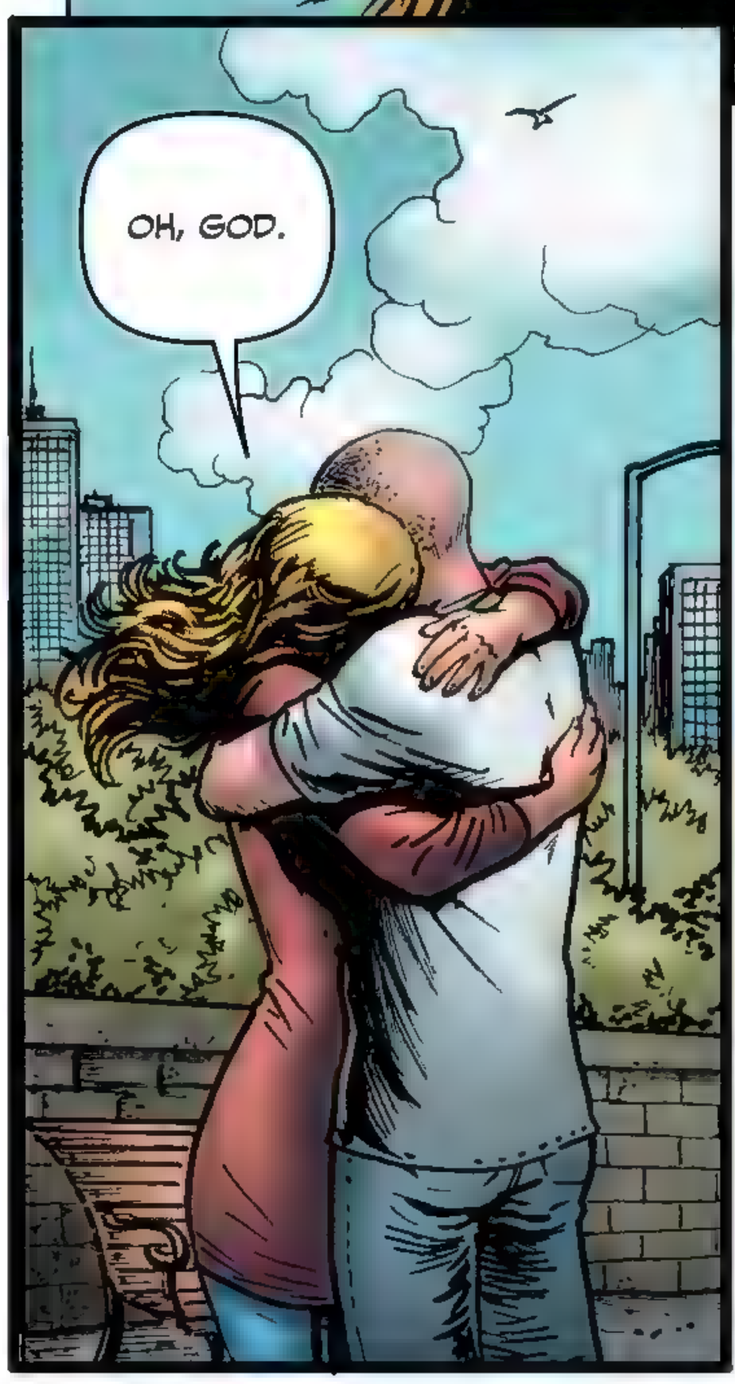

SAY JINGS FOR ME.

JINGS...
THERE YOU GO.

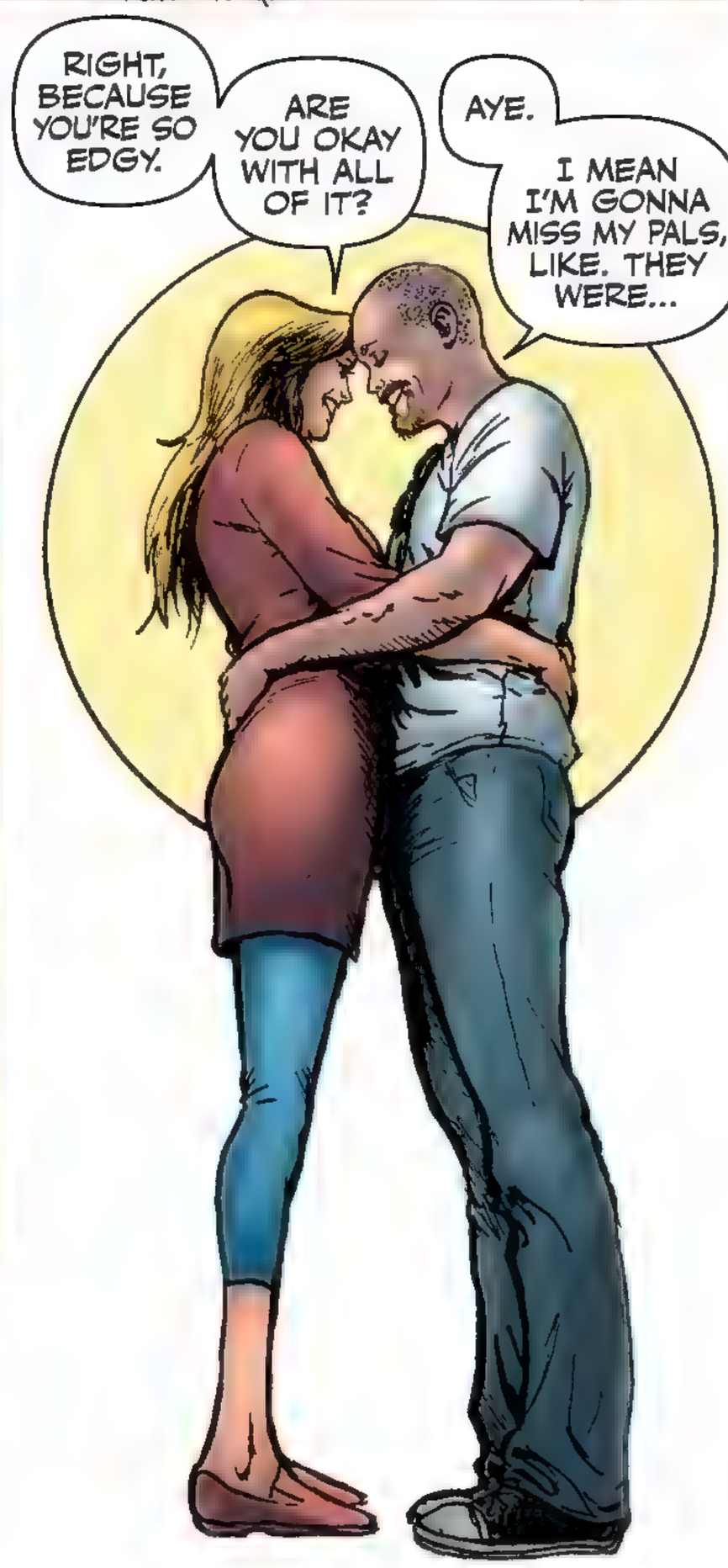

OH, GOD.
OH, GOD.


OH GOD OH GOD?
I WAS A WEE BIT SCARED YOU'D NO' COME.
YOU BAMPOT...!
RYBANT

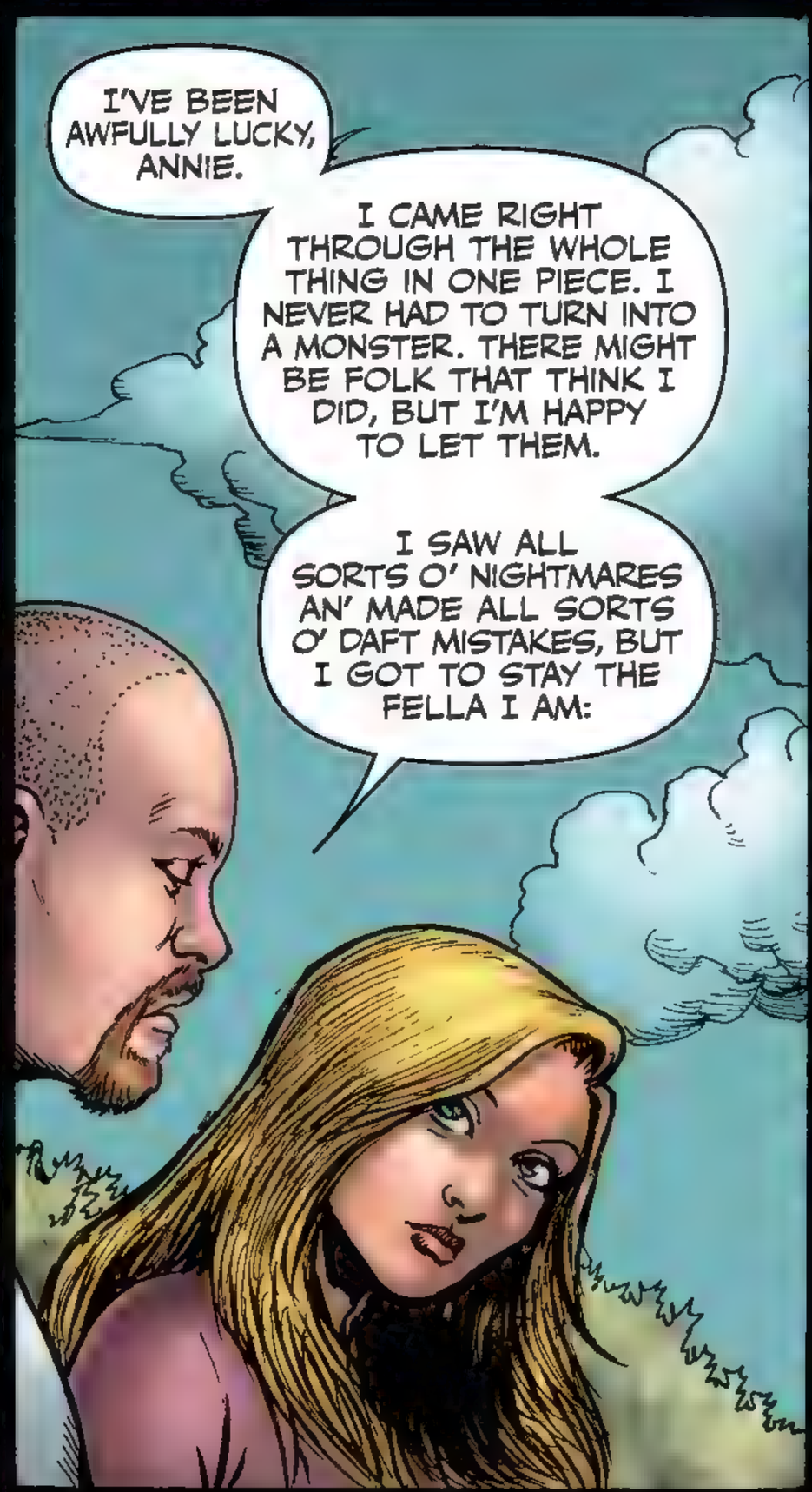

AFTER EVERYTHING YOU TOLD ME ON THE PHONE?

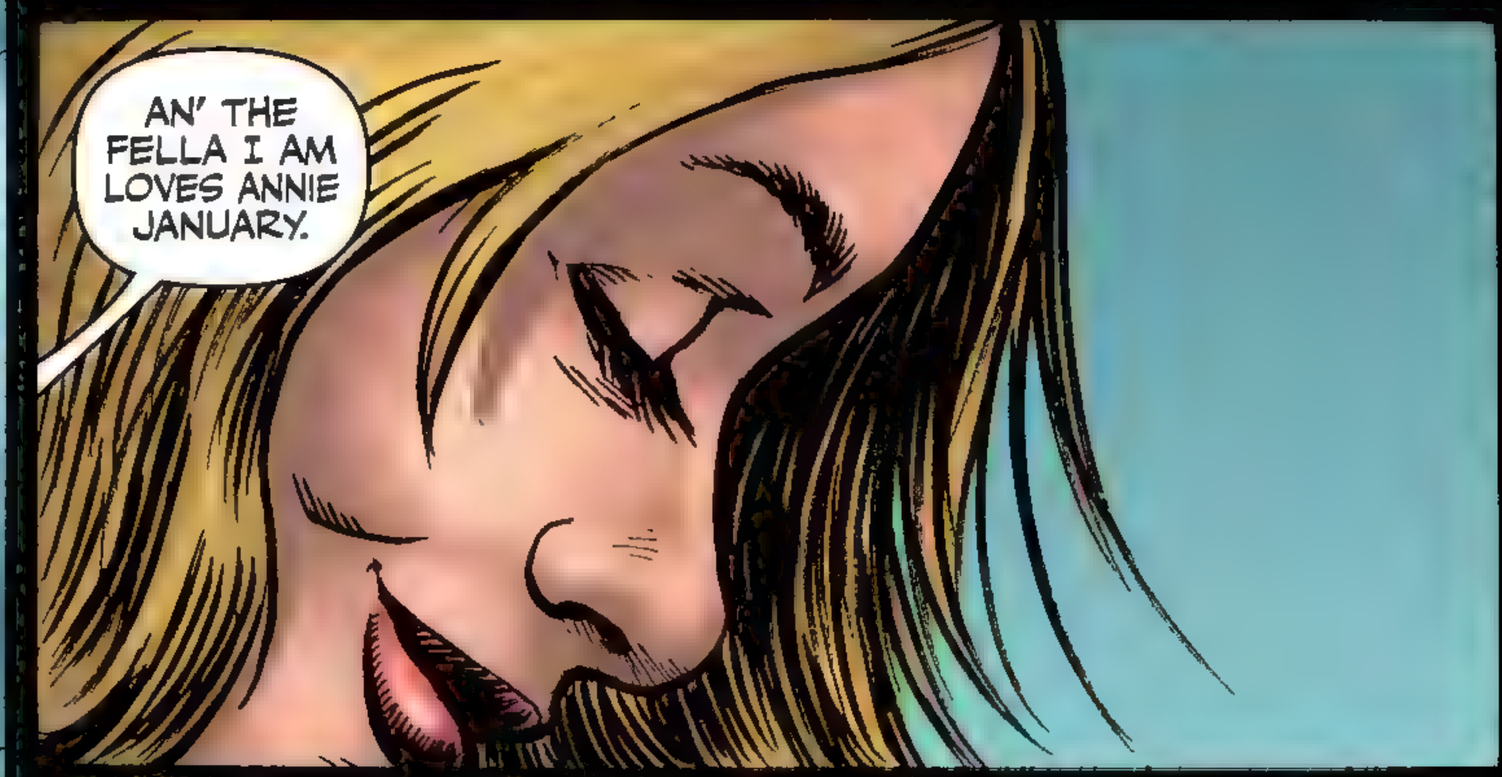

OH, GOD.

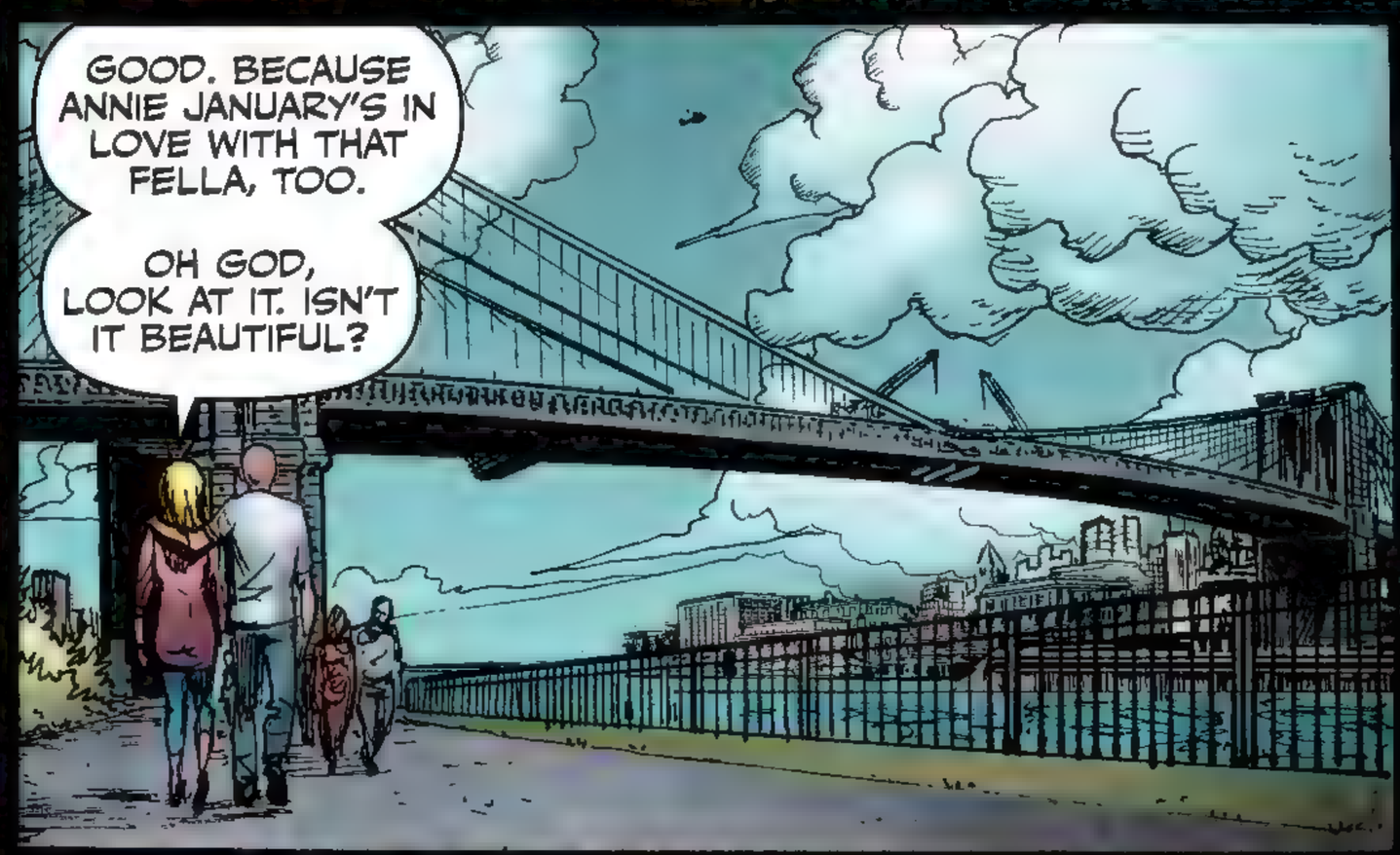
YOU KNOW, IT'S JUST OCCURRED TO ME: BAMPOT'S *MY WORD.* I OBJECT TO YER CULTURAL COLONISATION OF IT.
OH, YOU DO?
NEXT THING YOU KNOW YOU'LL BE PUTTIN' IT ON A T-SHIRT. PULLIN' MY TEETH, MAKIN' ME COSY AN' ACCEPTABLE.

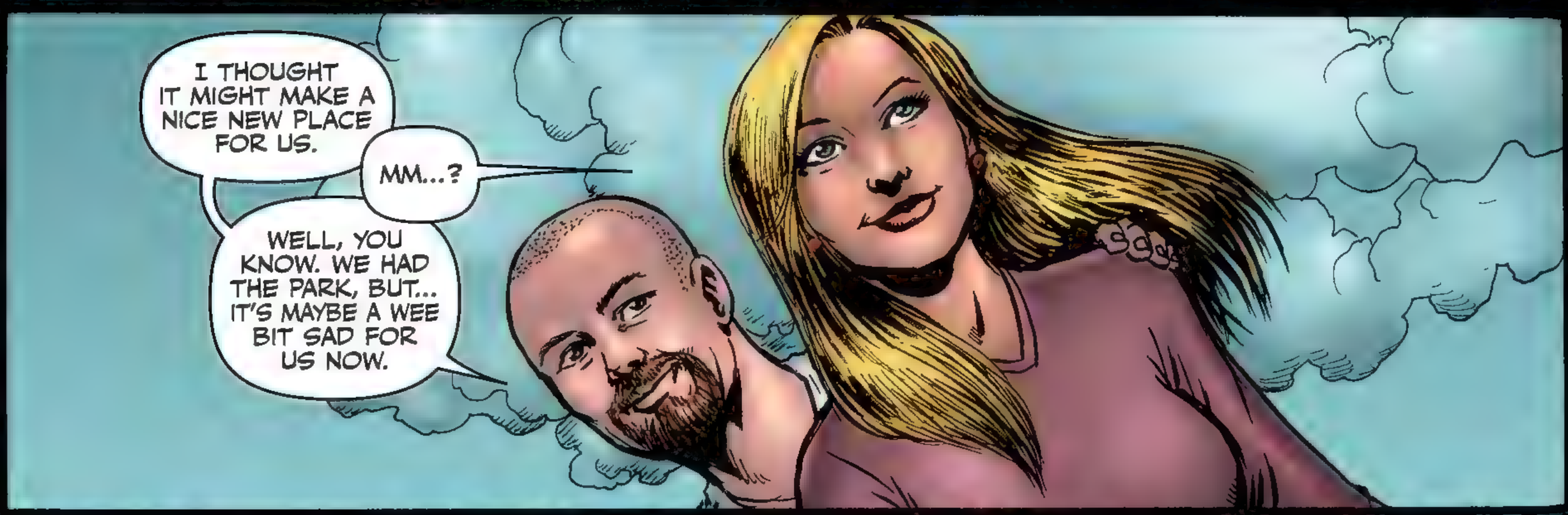

RIGHT, BECAUSE YOU'RE SO EDGY.
ARE YOU OKAY WITH ALL OF IT?
AYE.
I MEAN I'M GONNA MISS MY PALS, LIKE. THEY WERE...

THERE WAS NOTHIN' LIKE THEM IN THE WORLD.
WHAT ABOUT THE GUY, THE ONE IN CHARGE?
HE'S IN HELL.
KICKIN' THE *FUCK* OUT O' THE DEVIL.
AN' NOW I NEVER WANNA TALK ABOUT HIM AGAIN.


I'VE BEEN AWFULLY LUCKY, ANNIE.
I CAME RIGHT THROUGH THE WHOLE THING IN ONE PIECE. I NEVER HAD TO TURN INTO A MONSTER. THERE MIGHT BE FOLK THAT THINK I DID, BUT I'M HAPPY TO LET THEM.
I SAW ALL SORTS O' NIGHTMARES AN' MADE ALL SORTS O' DAFT MISTAKES, BUT I GOT TO STAY THE FELLA I AM:

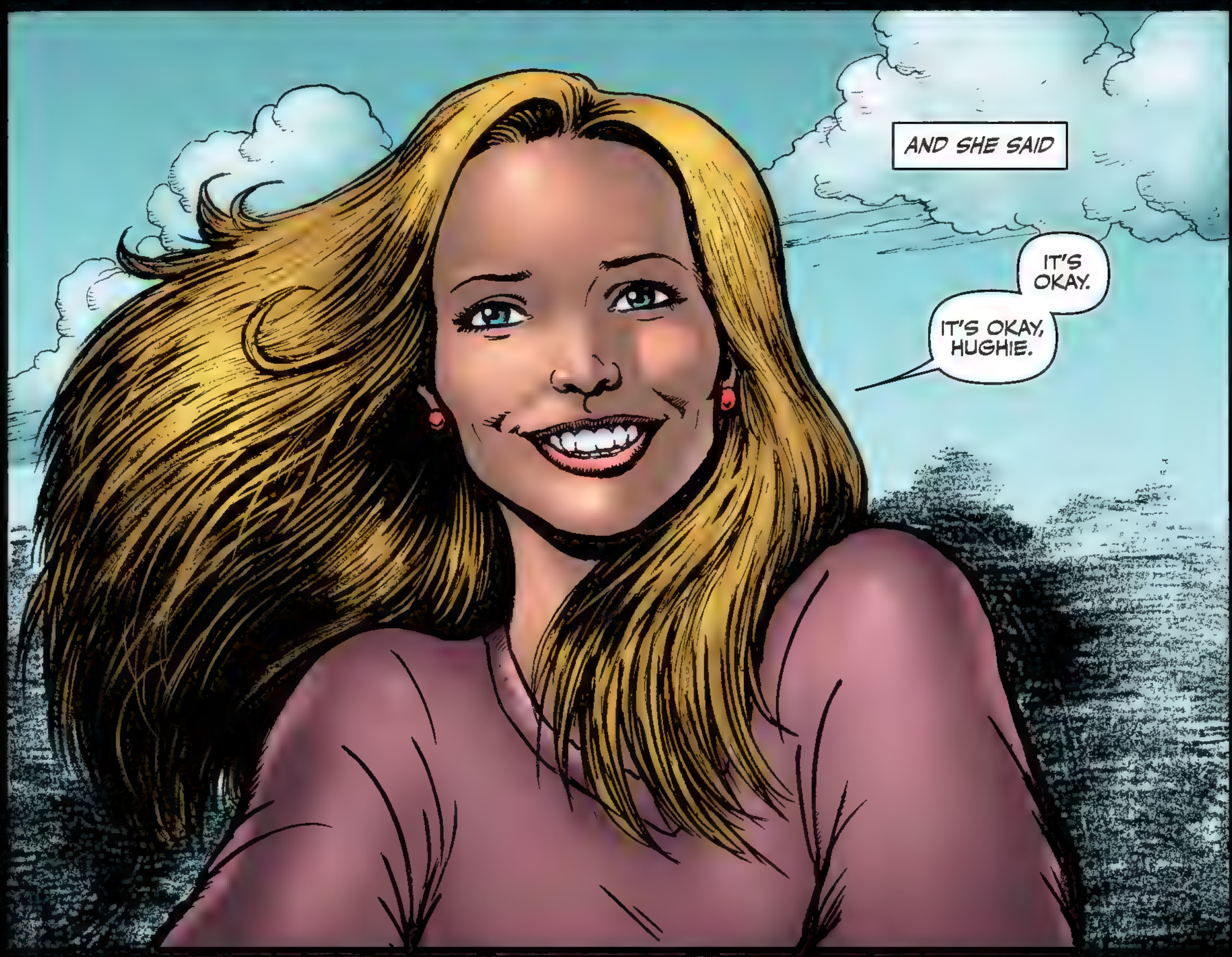

AN' THE FELLA I AM LOVES ANNIE JANUARY.

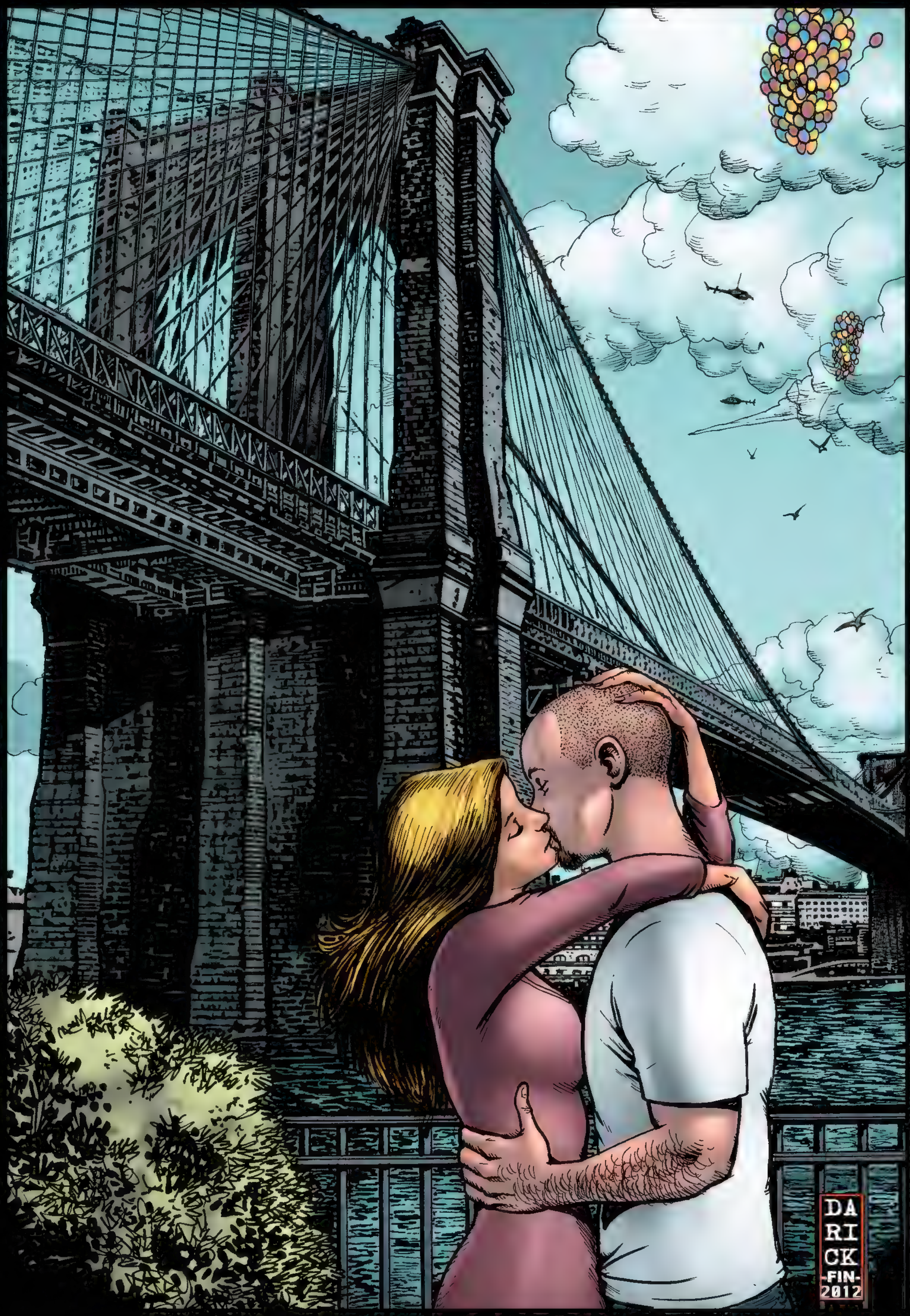

GOOD. BECAUSE ANNIE JANUARY'S IN LOVE WITH THAT FELLA, TOO.
OH GOD, LOOK AT IT. ISN'T IT BEAUTIFUL?


I THOUGHT IT MIGHT MAKE A NICE NEW PLACE FOR US.
MM...?
WELL, YOU KNOW. WE HAD THE PARK, BUT... IT'S MAYBE A WEE BIT SAD FOR US NOW.

I'D LIKE THAT. I'D LIKE IT TO BE OUR PLACE. COME ON.

IT STIRRED AN OLD FAMILIAR TERROR, THIS. IF ONLY FOR A MOMENT.
BUT SHE SAW. AND SHE SMILED.


AND SHE SAID
IT'S OKAY.
IT'S OKAY, HUGHIE.



YOU FOUND ME

Butcher by RUSS BRAUN

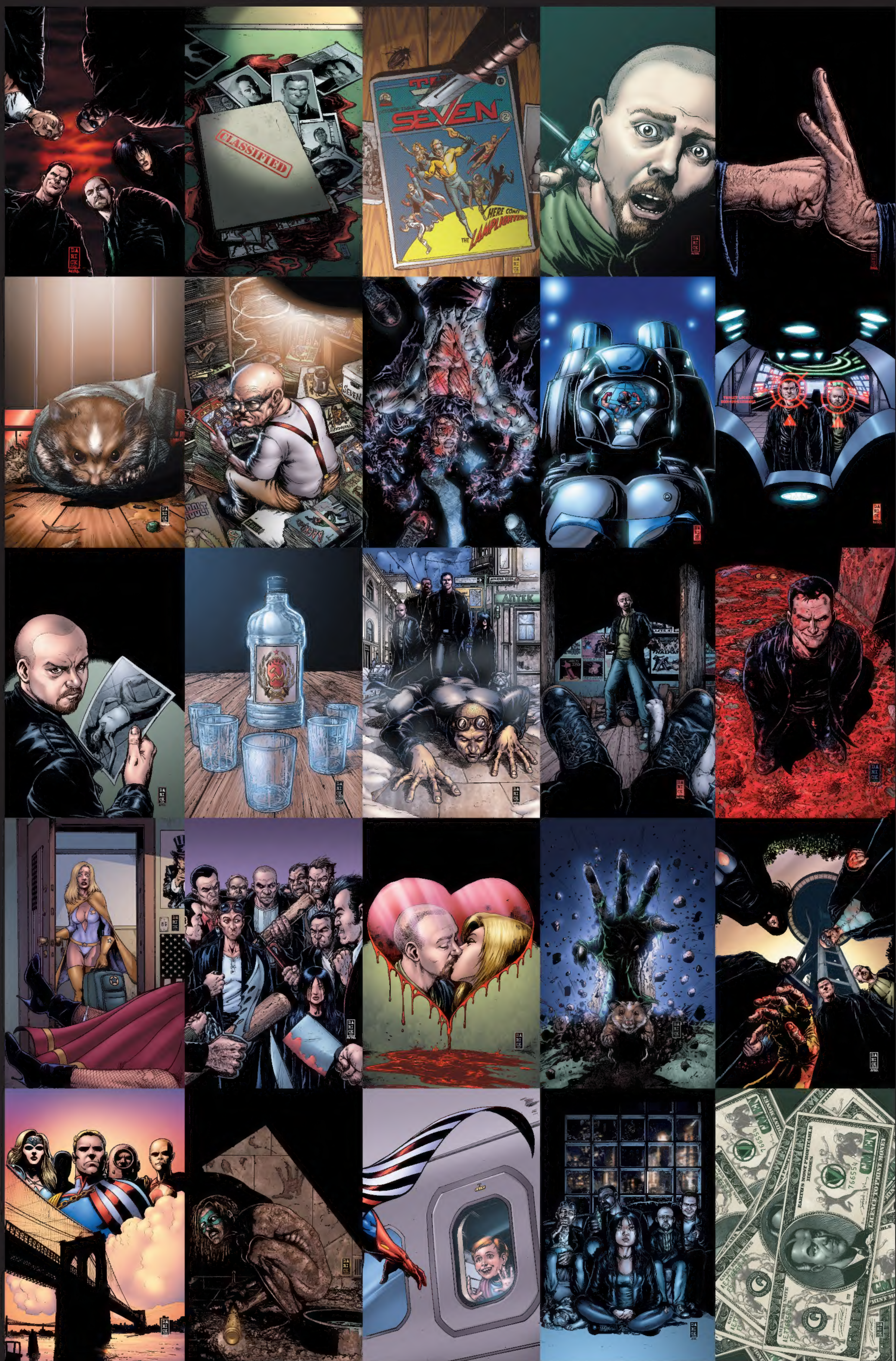
Wee Hughie by JOHN McCREA

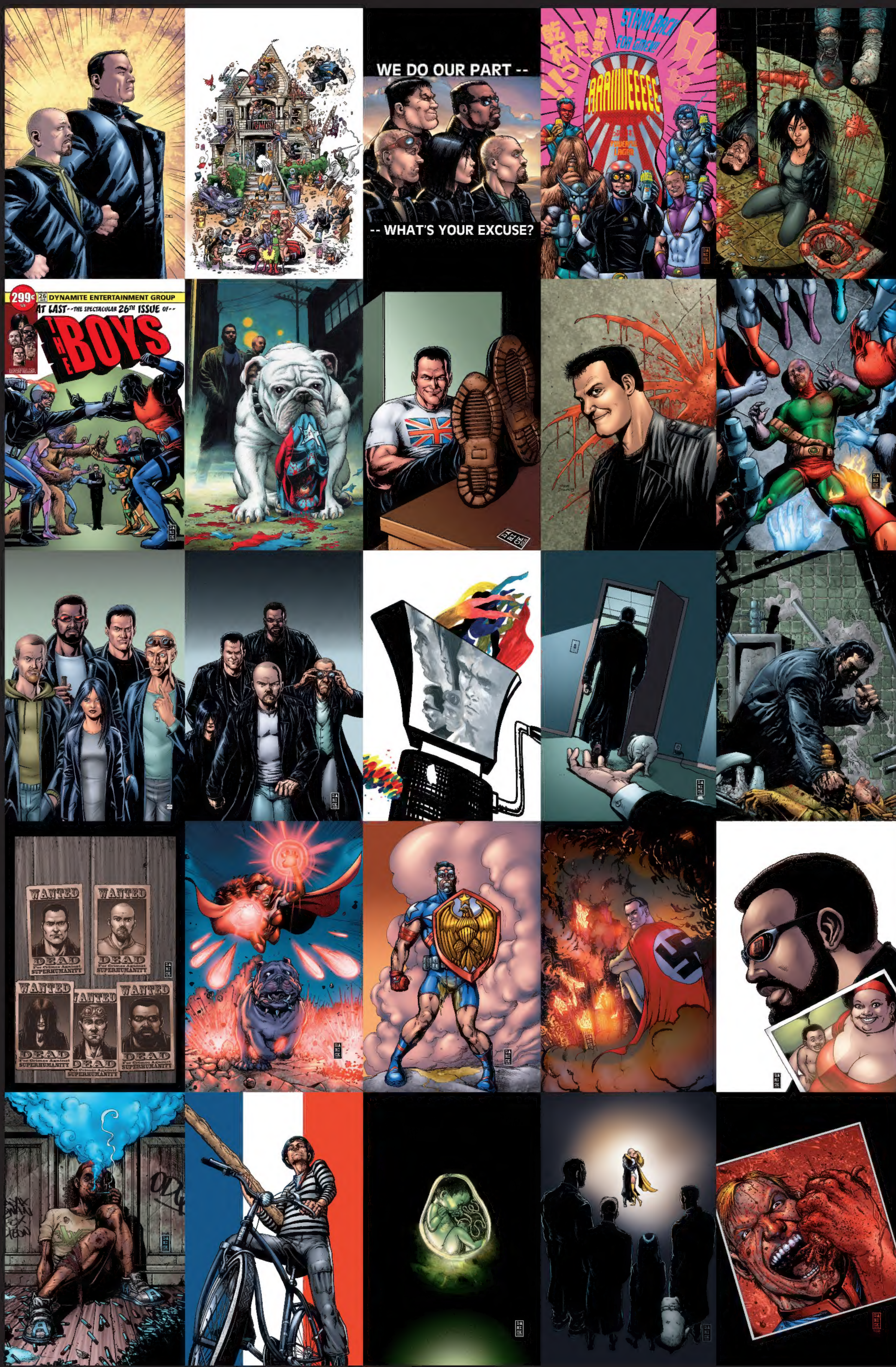
EZQUERRA
The Female by CARLOS EZQUERRA

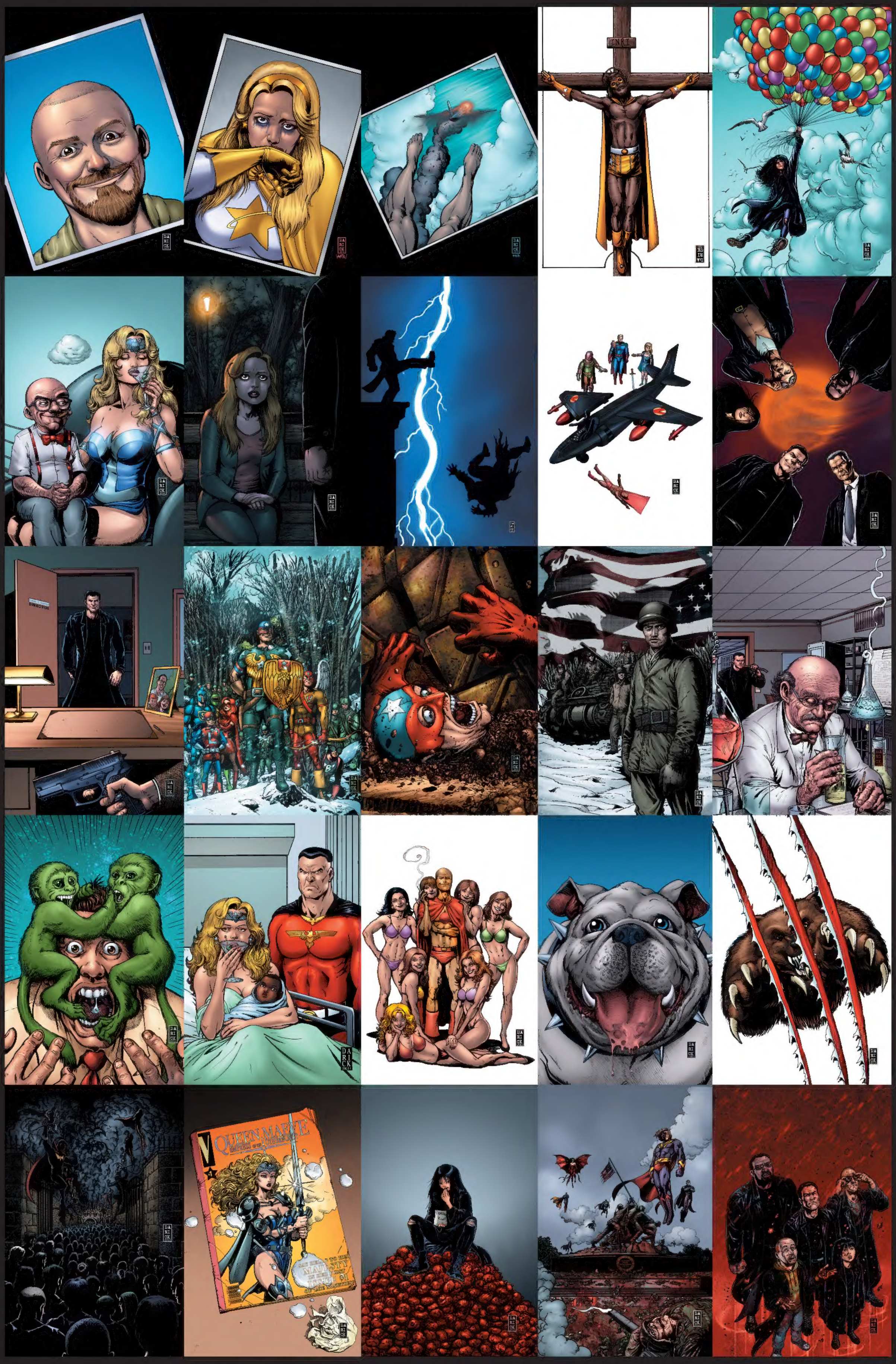
The Frenchman by PETER

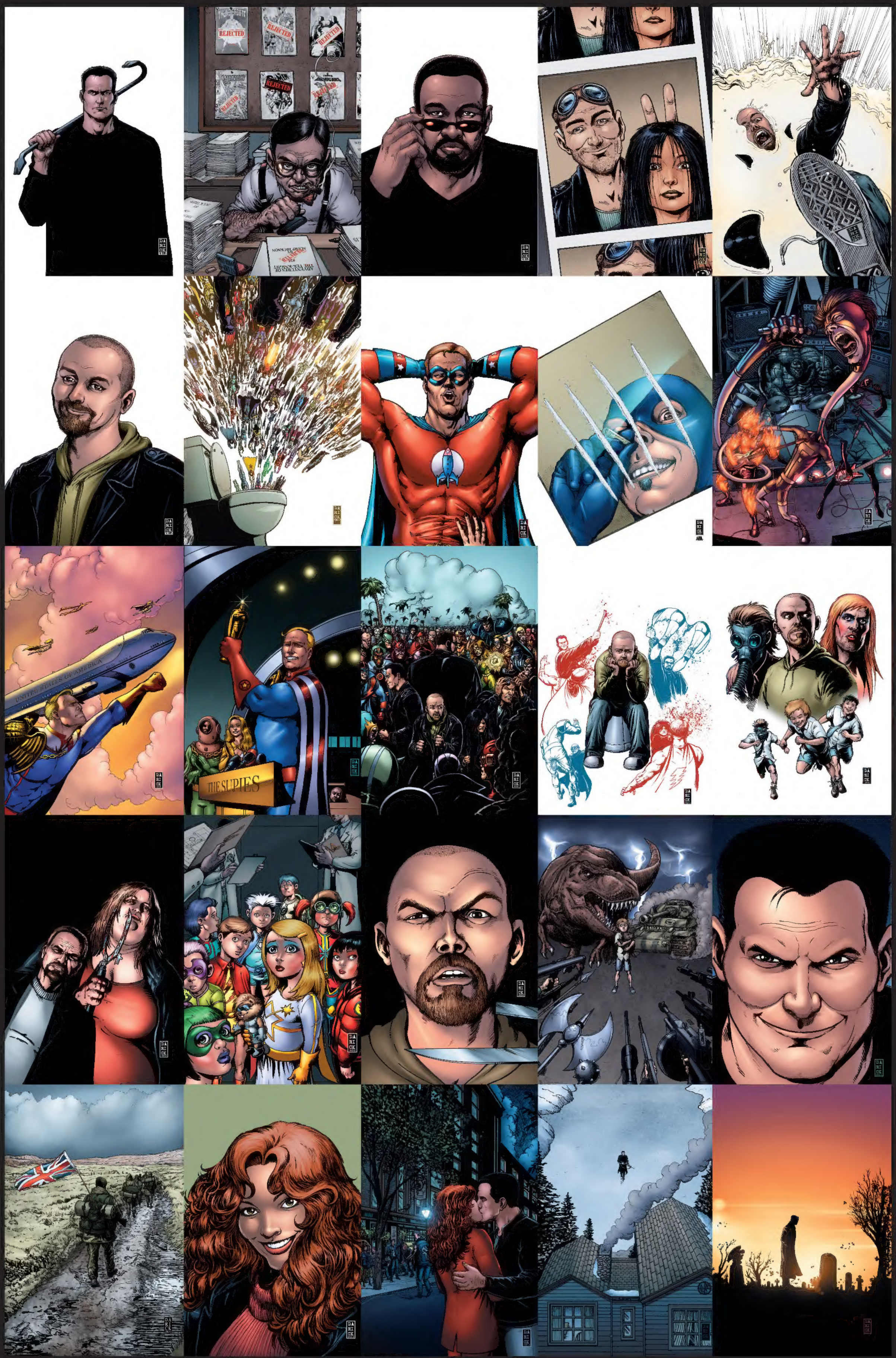
Mother's Milk by JOHN HIGGINS

THE BOYS COMPLETE COVER GALLERY




WE DO OUR PART --
-- WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE?
STAND BACK FOR GREAT!
AAAIIIIIEEEEE
299¢ US
26 JAN
DYNAMITE ENTERTAINMENT GROUP
AT LAST--THE SPECTACULAR 26TH ISSUE OF--
THE BOYS
WANTED
DEAD
For Crimes Against
SUPERHUMANITY


INRI
DIRECTOR
QUEEN MAB
V


REJECTED
THE SUPIES